THE

PROJECTOR;

COLLECTION OF ESSAYS,

IN THE MANNER OF THE SPECTATOR,

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED MONTHLY,

From Jan. 1802 *to Nov.* 1809.

BY

ALEXANDER CHALMERS, F.S.A.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following papers are part of the stock in trade of a PROJECTOR, who is about to retire from business. They have been on view for some years in the GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE, and are now offered for sale. While on view, the Proprietor was encouraged by many flattering requests to produce them in their present form; but whether these requests have led him into a mistake of which he will have cause to repent, or whether his compliance will be justified by an increased demand, are circumstances on which he cannot speculate. In their present state, they are not precisely what they were when first exhibited. While viewed in conjunction with articles of perhaps equal or greater importance, it was not for him to determine the exact share of

attention paid to them. To enable them, therefore, to stand alone, he has endeavoured to introduce many corrections and alterations, and has wholly omitted some articles, which either appeared trifling in themselves, or, from their temporary nature, were not quite consistent with his plan. He now leaves them to their fate, with the natural anxiety of one who has done his best, be it ever so little; and has only to add that the articles signed *Old Bullion* in N° 15 — *Quidnunc* in N° 16 — *Simon Somnus* in N° 19. and *Scipio Speculator* in N° 46. were received from unknown Correspondents.

London, Sept. 1, 1811.

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VOL. I.

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THE PROJECTOR.

THE PROJECTOR. No 1.

> "Quod magis ad nos
> Pertinet, et nescire malum est, agitamus: Utrumne
> Divitiis homines, an sint virtute beati?
> Quidve ad amicitias, usus rectumne, trahat nos?
> Et quæ sit natura boni, summumque quid ejus?" HOR.

January 1802.

COMPARISONS have been so often instituted, in order to illustrate the difficulties with which he is surrounded who makes his first appearance as a periodical writer, that I shall omit any attempt to conciliate the favour, or surprize the fancy of my readers by a lucky hit of the kind. It may be sufficient, I hope, in order to preserve the accustomed shew of modesty, that I have ranked myself by name among a race of men the most despised of all

human beings, and generally the most unfortunate; that I claim no other than that attention, almost exhausted, which is usually bestowed on PROJECTORS, and that I acknowledge myself possessed of no better chance for success in my schemes, than my predecessors have had in theirs.

In such an act of voluntary humility, which the censorious are welcome to consider as disguised vanity, I trust it will be owned I am not behind those whom I dare not approach in any other quality. He that called himself a Tatler, a Rambler, or an Idler, might naturally expect support from that party whose disposition and pursuits were implied in his title, and which was neither few in numbers or in consequence, although he confessedly excluded himself from the favour of every other class of mankind. But in owning myself a PROJECTOR, without inviting the aid of any, I have alarmed the suspicions and the contempt of all; and my downfall, when it comes, will be so much in the natural course of things, as to occasion neither wonder nor pity, for "it might have easily been foreseen," and "who could expect any thing else from a PROJECTOR?"

In truth, whether successful or unsuccessful, PROJECTORS have in all ages been held in low

estimation.

estimation. Pope ranks them in very sorry company:

"Astrologers that future fates foreshew,
PROJECTORS, quacks, and lawyers not a few."

Steele himself, who may be supposed much better acquainted with the subject, as he is the ARCH-PROJECTOR of this nation, and once conceived the stupendous plan of reforming its morals, which we have all been since nibbling at, says, "There cannot be a more ridiculous animal than one who seems to regard the good of others. He in civil life, whose thoughts turn upon schemes which may be of general benefit, without farther reflection, is called a PROJECTOR." By the important words "farther reflection" this author undoubtedly means, without any advantage to themselves, which is said to be too frequently the case with the tribe of Projectors. And yet I have known many of them whose schemes were, to say the least, as beneficial to themselves as to any one else; and this would, perhaps, be oftener the case, if there were a *good understanding* between the party offering the scheme and the party accepting it.

Mr. Addison, who likewise ought to have mentioned men of my unfortunate name with more respect and commiseration, asserts that,

at a coffeehouse, he found out a man to be a PROJECTOR "by the shabbiness of his dress, the extravagance of his conceptions, and the hurry of his speech." Features so strongly marked as these cannot, indeed, be well mistaken, if it shall be once agreed that they are the distinguishing characteristics of PROJECTORS. But I hope on some future occasion to be able to prove that they will not apply to all PROJECTORS, of whom some certainly think justly, speak slowly, and have credit with their taylor. In the mean time, I shall content myself with allowing, that there is a particular species of Projector who may be discovered by these badges of a contriving genius. I have known a few such in our times, and indeed they cannot affect concealment; for, their projects being mostly of a political kind, they are obliged to frequent coffeehouses, and other public meetings, in order to announce what, in a dearth of credit with booksellers, it may not be convenient to commit to the press. Now of this class of political Projectors, as far as my observation extends, "extravagance of conceptions" belongs principally to those gentlemen who deal in schemes of the wholesale kind, who undertake very largely for the good of mankind, and are for overturning governments,

vernments, and throwing nations into confusion. The means whereby this is to be done are very often disproportioned, in all human appearance, to the end; as when the tyrannical speak of liberty, and the most worthless of mankind offer schemes of happiness. But my readers must here observe that this is the great boast of all such Projectors, namely, that the essence of their art consists in effecting the highest purposes by the lowest means, or in forming the greatest plans with the most insignificant materials and the least labour; and this œconomy enters largely into their practice, whether a government is to be overturned, or a shopkeeper to be taken in, whether a multitude is to be deceived, or a bailiff eluded.

The other characteristic mentioned by Mr. Addison, is "hurry of speech." This belongs to Projectors whose plans seldom go farther than words, and who are, therefore, so extremely desirous of speaking their minds, that their words are taught to make their escape with precipitation, and without waiting for any order or arrangement. As to the "shabbiness of dress" noted so pointedly by the Spectator, it is a well known characteristic that belongs almost exclusively to projecting financiers; who, in their anxiety to defray the

expences

expences of the nation, are apt to overlook their own little concerns, and who become enamoured of round numbers, and speak of millions with a grand and imposing emphasis. This kind partiality for the publick is soon observed to spread over their whole appearance the infallible mark of distinction here noticed. But such are not held in very high estimation; and some of them have been peculiarly unfortunate, partly owing to the inattention of ministers of state, who are always inclined to think themselves the best judges of what belongs to their office, and partly to the ungrateful neglect of the publick at large, so that it frequently happens that a man shall be able to pay the debts of the nation in a few years, who knows not where to procure credit for the next meal. Indeed, there is this fatality attending the financial Projector, that he never meddles with the subject of debt until he is deeply involved in it, and never undertakes any thing for the nation but what he can no longer practise for himself. I have always advised those with whom my advice is likely to prevail, to avoid such dangerous projects as are not to be entered upon without a capital, but I cannot say I have been very successful. For this reason, I am sometimes inclined to think that poverty

and

and seclusion have a natural tendency to bring on fits of financial calculation, and that some men learn to raise budgets and loans as birds are taught to sing, by being confined in a dark room.

I must, however, add with respect to the above classes of political Projectors, that they do not belong to our family: and, however numerous they may have been lately (for some rank them among the miseries of war), the success of their plans is not so frequent or beneficial as to recommend them to wise and considerate persons. I must, therefore, as a necessary recommendation to the favour of my readers, disclaim all connexion with them, as well as with the religious Projectors of late years, who have been particularly distinguished by "extravagance of conceptions;" and some of them, I trust, have not been deprived of that other characteristic, "shabbiness of dress;" at least, it seems to belong to, and ought ever to accompany those who have attempted to substitute the "filthy rags" of impiety for the more pure "robe of righteousness."

But still I hope that, with the exceptions already stated, it may not be altogether dishonourable to enlist in the band of PROJECTORS; and, among other inducements of a personal nature,

I am

I am encouraged in this attempt by the liberal sentiments of Dr. Samuel Johnson, himself a worthy member of the *corps*, who thus vindicates the genuine race of PROJECTORS: "By the unreasonable distribution of praise and blame, none have suffered oftener than PROJECTORS, whose rapidity of imagination and vastness of design raise such envy in their fellow mortals, that every eye watches their fall, and every heart exults at their distresses." In another place this eminent author says, and a most consoling decision it is, "The folly of projection is very seldom the folly of a fool."

In forming a design like the present, it has been usual to bespeak the attention of the publick, sometimes by a description of the author's person, and sometimes by the genealogy of his family. With respect to the person of the PROJECTOR, it would be of little consequence to give a description of what, by the constitution of periodical writings, is meant to be concealed. The best delineation may be suspected where there can be no opportunity to compare it with the original; and the circumstances of stature, complexion, and feature, have seldom much connexion with the movements of the pen. Disregarding precedents of this kind, therefore, I shall wear a short face or a long one

one as I find it convenient, and shall vary my age and shape according to the subject I may handle, or the character I may perform. Gentlemen seldom are curious in such matters; and if any lady thinks proper to inquire, I have instructed my publisher to make me neither old nor ugly.

But as to family, were I to indulge so unjustifiable a passion as the love of ancestry at my first appearance, I might assert, without the least hazard of contradiction, that the PROJECTORS are a family of great antiquity, and that there are few countries in which some branch or other of the race has not settled, if the word settled can be applicable to persons of so various a turn that they are sometimes said even "to move heaven and earth." We are to be found however in all parts of the globe, and may with great confidence put the question,

"Quæ regio in terris nostri non plena laboris?"

Nor is the family more numerous than the infinity of designs by which they have sought to raise their fame and fortune. No substance, created or uncreated, has escaped their inventive or convertive powers. Body and mind are alike subjected to their experiments: and art and

and nature are alike pregnant with materials for the promotion of their schemes. I must confess however, that this variety, although honourable to that universal genius which is the proud boast of certain moderns, has tended in a great measure to confound the merit of Projectors, and throw an air of ridicule upon their labours when viewed in the lump. Most of our family have felt "the unreasonable disproportion of praise or blame;" and the high honours of philosophical research have sometimes been bestowed on the contriver of only a paltry convenience. Thus the name of the inventor of the telescope is little known to the generality of those who have agreed to keep in perpetual remembrance the illustrious character who first taught us to place a wine-glass on a square piece of linen. There are many disputes among the learned relating to the right of Galileo, while that of Doyley is acknowledged by universal suffrage. And the memory of the parliamentary renown of a once eminent statesman is fast going into the land of oblivion, while it will never be forgotten that he was the first who placed a slice of ham between two slices of bread and butter. More recently still, a young nobleman has thrust himself into the rank of PROJECTORS, by no other

other merit than that of bringing skirts into disrepute, and changing the full-length of a great coat to the size of a kit-cat.

Again it must be remarked, for I do not wish to gloss over the little infirmities of our order, that Projectors, like poets, are liable to fall into the *bathos*, when they attempt too many things, mixing the heroic with the ludicrous, and the grave with the familiar. It is really whimsical to see a plan for introducing lax principles of religion in the same volume with directions for transplanting hedges; and the same man contriving to make coach-lamps stationary, who had just before written on the perpetual motion. Yet thus it always is with our numerous family; and it must frequently remind the publick of Horace's composition of a man, a horse, a fish, and a woman.

In this versatile humour of "putting our hands to any thing," while some are constructing iron bridges, others are improving green spectacles. While some are forming constitutions for new republics, others are enriching their country in the article of windmills. While some are introducing in new shapes the exploded opinions of old infidels, others are fitting out vessels to go against wind and tide. While some are so aspiring as to

mount

mount to smoaky chimneys, others are bringing down their genius to razor-strops and cork-screws. While some have raised a mighty name by planning revolutions, others have given their nights and days to cart-wheels. While some have plunged into favour with posterity by the depth of a tunnel, others have burst into reputation by the power of steam. Nay, one of my acquaintance, a barrister, remarkable for his skill in cross-questioning witnesses, has spent half his fees in the construction of pumps; and a very ingenious clergyman, who distinguished himself last year on the question of residence, has done nothing since but make experiments on black-beetles.

It is thus that the name of PROJECTOR is brought into disgrace, and frequently supposed to imply a restlessness of fancy, and a perpetual effort at useless contrivances. But there is certainly nothing in the name itself that will justify all this. If a Projector fails, he but shares the fate of many others who know not that they belong to the same class. If the matter, indeed, were seriously considered, a great portion of mankind who are apt to shrink from that name would find that they have been Projectors the greater part of their lives, but with a strange inversion of purposes.

What,

What, for example, is a man whose fortune has been squandered on dogs, horses, and gaming-houses, but a Projector who has contrived to ruin himself in the shortest possible space of time, and with the least assistance from art or nature? And what is a woman known only in the annals of gaming and adultery, but a machine contrived by fashion to destroy the happiness of a family, and contribute to the disgrace of a sex?

It may now be asked, since I have disowned so many of the name, in what class I desire to be placed, and what is the nature of those projects I intend to deliver through the medium of the Gentleman's Magazine? The question is fair, and shall not be evaded; but, as every future paper will be an answer, it may at present suffice to say negatively, that I have nothing to advance in the arts or sciences properly so called; I have no improvements to offer in botany, chemistry, agriculture, or mechanics; I have made no progress in the discovery of the longitude, and shall not meddle with the lever, the axle, the pulley, or the inclined plane. Yet, that I may not seem wholly inattentive to such objects, it will probably fall in my way to offer some improvements, if not upon wheel-carriages, at least on

on those who use them: and if I have no discoveries to make of intrigues among "the plants," I shall not fail to attend to those which are matured in the hot-houses of dissipation. I may likewise take notice of some new-invented wind-mills, of those schemes which depend on vapour, and of those projects of felicity which so frequently end in air. I shall not fail to record the explosions which attend disappointed vanity and perverted talents, and carefully record those variations of atmosphere which at certain seasons render home pernicious. It will perhaps be found that my projects will be as various as my materials; and, what may appear somewhat singular, I shall more frequently refer my readers to improvements that are very old, than to those that are very new. Among the class of Projectors to which I belong, it has been long an error to look forward rather than backward, and to neglect old schemes for new, before the new have been proved, and the old worn out. In mechanics this may be only ridiculous; in morals it has been fatal.

THE PROJECTOR. No 2.

"Verte omnes tete in FACIES; et contrahe quicquid
Sive animis, sive arte vales." —VIRG.

"Get all the HEADS you can, no matter how."

February 1802.

If secrecy has its advantages, it has its disadvantages likewise. If he who determines to carry on his business *incog.* escapes some dangers to which the profession of Author as well as Projector is exposed, he is at the same time the continual prey of suspicions and fears, and may be said to enjoy the snugness rather than the security of a private station. He is apt to fancy that he is discovered by those who are thinking on other subjects, and his fears induce him to take to himself casual hints and expressions which are not levelled at him. He consequently often endeavours to escape when there is nothing to fly from, and guards anxiously against detection before he has even excited curiosity.

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It may be thought that one who is sensible of all this would be proof against such vain apprehensions and imaginations; but I know by experience that Philosophy is a much better thing to write about than to practise; and, therefore, without boasting of superior resolution and firmness, I must humbly take the liberty to shelter myself under the authority of a learned Divine, who assures his readers, that "the best of men are but men at the best."

A few days ago I met with an incident which certainly tried my courage, and which, I hope it will be allowed, was somewhat disheartening to a PROJECTOR in the commencement of his public labours. As I was walking through the Strand, I happened to overtake a man and woman, evidently of the lower order, in close conversation. What the subject was I had no business to inquire, and no anxiety to discover; and I thought indeed that I had heard quite enough, when, on my passing them, the woman exclaimed, "Ay, he had always too many *projects* in his head to do any good."

Now, although it may be very allowable in my literary friends to give me their advice, caution me against precipitation, and exhort me to weigh well

"Quid

"Quid ferre recusent,
Quid valeant humeri,"

the pride of authorship disdains to submit to the sneers and discouragement of the vulgar, who can be no judges, or very indifferent ones, of the weighty matters of the quill. We are less ashamed to be conquered by the lion than by an animal of more ignoble breed. It is the kick of the ass which aggravates the injury, and turns misfortune into insult. It may be said, however, that the ominous words above recorded were not addressed to me. Perhaps not, although of that I have no proof; yet I confess I could not help feeling their force, as a man will not be less hurt by a stone thrown at random than if it had been pointed. The incident afforded me many grave and dejecting reflections on the usage I may expect, unless I can contrive to rescue the name of PROJECTOR from the disrepute into which it has fallen, and give a sort of consequence to those who confessedly have no object in view but the good of mankind.

On my arrival at home, I could not help imparting the circumstance to a confidential friend who was waiting for me, and whose opinions seemed in perfect unison with my

own. "I sympathize cordially with you," said he, "and can enter into your feelings. There is nothing hurts us so much as to suffer by those whom we think our inferiors. For my part, I carry this doctrine rather farther than yourself, or than most men. If I am doomed to receive injuries of any kind, I own I should prefer them at the hands of persons of superior rank, or even from inanimate objects of the better sort. For example, if a man is to lose his money on Hounslow-heath or Shooter's-hill, how much more agreeable to part with it to a highwayman genteelly mounted, than to a low-bred footpad so poor and miserably furnished for his trade, that he is, perhaps, all the while frightening you with a brass candlestick? And if I were to meet with an accident in the street, I should certainly prefer a patrician to a plebeian casualty. I never pass by a cheesemonger's, when they are popping their cheeses from a cart into the shop, without shuddering at the disgraceful end of that man who should be killed by one of them. What a pretty figure a Cheshire cheese would make in an Obituary, or a few deal-boards on a marble monument! Who would not prefer dying under the Lord Chancellor's coach, or even that of the Speaker, to the best dray Mr.

Whitbread ever sent out? And then, with respect to the dangers of the sea, who would not rather go to the bottom in a 74 than in a coasting vessel? As to diseases too, I think there are distinctions to be made. There is something becoming in a fever or gout; but I am at this moment tormented with the tooth-ach, which I tell you 'between ourselves.' There is a dignity, Mr. Projector, there is a dignity to be consulted in our misfortunes; and no man ought to be so miserable as not to study the Graces. You never heard me grumble about the thousand pounds I lost by Jack Humbug's bankruptcy; and why? because I knew he never was worth a groat, and broke for half a million."

My friend was running on in this strain, in which probably few of my readers will be disposed to follow him, when the servant brought me the following letter, which operated as a more refreshing cordial than all he had advanced on proud losses, spirited robberies, genteel accidents, and right-honourable fractures. I cannot refuse to give a preference to a writer who has honoured me with so early an application.

"TO THE AUTHOR OF THE PROJECTOR.

"SIR

"I SHALL make no apology for, perhaps, being the first to address you on the commencement of your paper. I have no compliments to pay, for neither of us is yet of consequence to 'give and take' in that way. I can foresee all you were about to say in your second number; your modesty, your humility, and the useful train of ingratiating preliminaries which your predecessors have advanced, in order to deprecate critical severity. Perhaps you were about to give us an account of yourself, your family, or your club, for Projectors, of all people, ought to keep one another in countenance by association; but these matters, let me tell you, will come out hereafter with more propriety. In my opinion, you should imitate the dramatic rather than the historic form, and begin in the middle of the plot, reserving the *denouement* for the last act.

"My business is urgent—I have discoveries to make of great importance, and which cannot be longer concealed; and I know no better vehicle for their disclosure than that you have chosen for the exhibition of your projects. Most of Mr. Urban's readers are very

much concerned in what I am to bring forward; and therefore, without farther preface, I hope you will give this letter a place in your next paper.

"Your readers have, doubtless, heard of the miseries created in Europe by a sect called the *Illuminés*, or *Illuminati*, whose object was to throw every kingdom and state into confusion, and to take off the *heads* of all persons of worth and distinction. I need not say how well they succeeded. But you may be justly alarmed when I inform you, that a party has been gradually forming in this country, whose designs are no less aimed at the *heads* of the better part of the community than those of the *Illuminati*, and who imitate them in many particulars. They assume, for instance, the name of *Illustrantes*, or *Illustrators*, which, I think, will be allowed to signify much the same with *Illuminati*; and so eager are they to take off the heads of persons eminent for rank, talents, wisdom, and piety, that they care not what risks they run, nor what depredations they commit, to attain the desired object. Having been a considerable sufferer by them, although my own *head* be too insignificant for their notice, I trust I am qualified to explain their

history, and I shall not be scrupulous in my narrative.

"At what time this conspiracy was formed I have not been able to learn; but the more early conspirators betrayed their designs as far back as the 17th century. I have been able to recover the names of Evelyn, Ashmole, and Pepys, who left large collections of *heads* severed from the bodies of the most distinguished characters of their day. The Earl of Oxford, in the beginning of the last century, was another of the same school. One Ames, in later times, wrote a book expressly in favour of their doctrines, which he called a *Catalogue;* as the French *Illuminati* chose to disperse their principles in a *Dictionary,* or *Encyclopædia.* It is not difficult to see through such tricks. The late Earl of Orford, better known by the name of Horace Walpole, was a distinguished partizan of this sect, and contributed more to *beheadings* than any man in our times. It is incredible how many persons of note he brought to the *block;* and so hardened was he in this wickedness, that, when he published what he had done, he called the work *Anecdotes.* I could also mention a Mr. Cracherode, lately deceased, of whom it was said, that 'no money could stand between him and any man's *head*

he took a fancy to.' And I might point out some of the sect who are living, and, what is very extraordinary, hold valuable and lucrative offices under Government, and yet are notoriously addicted to the principles of the *Illustrantes*.

"But I wave the mention of individuals, some of whom, we must in charity believe, may have been artfully seduced into the notion that detruncation is necessary to human happiness, and that an English gentleman is valued, like an Indian warrior, for the number of *scalps* he can produce. I say, I wave this, and pass to one GRANGER, whom I take to be the Robespierre of the faction, the *hydra-headed* monster, whom nothing could satisfy, who devoured innumerable ranks and classes, and fixed their *heads* in his repositories, as the Turks are said to decorate their palaces with the heads of their prisoners. To this man, who, strange to say! was a clergyman of the Church of England, we are to look, if not for the rise, certainly for the extensive spread of the sect of *Illustrators*; and it is wonderful to me that he should have been so long unnoticed, and permitted to die quietly in his bed, although, I make no doubt, he must in his last days have been haunted by the *headless corpora, opera omnia, systemata,* &c.

which he had so cruelly mutilated. Be that as it may, he wrote four volumes explaining the doctrines of the sect, offering rules and maxims, and pointing out where *heads* may be got let them be ever so *private*. Of this work I am sorry to record the success; but my library furnishes me with so many melancholy proofs, that I cannot be silent: and lest this should be thought a matter which personally concerns myself only, I appeal to those standing evidences, the book-stalls of London and Westminster, where the *trunks* of all the eminent men of the last three centuries lie exposed without a *head* among them, and are sold as mere trash and rubbish; for, alas! in the opinion of most men, what is a *body* without a *head?*

"I have stated some degrees of comparison between the *Illuminati* and the *Illustrators*; but I must now explain wherein they differ, and wherein, in my opinion, the former are the more consistent characters. The *Illuminati* had for their object the destruction of monarchy and religion. Thus far we know; they scarcely affected to disguise it, for the object pervades all their undertakings. But the *Illustrators* cannot be accused of aiming their weapons at the *heads* of kings and clergy so much as at confounding all ranks, orders, and degrees, jumbling together peers, gentry,

clergy, lawyers, soldiers, authors, artists, and women, without any distinction arising from professional merit, wisdom, valour, wit, or beauty; often indeed preferring deformity to symmetry, a Hunchback to an Adonis, a Fool to a Newton, and setting a value on some *heads* for no reason that I can discover but because the parties they belonged to happened to be hanged. The object of the sect, therefore, you may perceive, Mr. PROJECTOR, is sheer anarchy, as may be farther elucidated by mentioning some of their well-known practices.

"And here, I must say, they discover an uncommon artfulness. You never know exactly where to *have* them. If from their cruel practices on the bodies of Kings (and they have actually cut off the heads of some from their monuments *), you accuse them of antimonarchical principles, they smile, talk of their impartiality, and shew you that they have done the same thing to Freethinkers and Philosophers. In truth, if the subject were not too serious, one would be induced to think they were a species of humourists who indulged in odd fancies for the amusement of mankind. I have known one of them exchange *the Seven*

* One Rapin, who is now standing by me, can attest this.

Bishops for a *scarce Chimney sweeper*, and barter the *family* of *Stuart* for a *gang of Conspirators*. So little taste and gallantry have they, that I have seen *Anne Boleyne* and *Mary Queen of Scots* given for *Moll Cutpurse*; and it is not above a month ago that one of the sect, in a public shop in Westminster, in the presence of several clergymen, offered *Bishop Latimer*, *Sir Thomas More*, and five *Gresham Professors*, for *Colly Molly Puff*. A gay youth may be of opinion, that the exchange of a superannuated *Judge* for a *wise Virgin* is not very injudicious; but it is intolerable to think that an *old Sexton* should be pitted against a whole *Dean* and *chapter*, and *Mother Louse* take precedence of *Queen Elizabeth*. Yet such anarchy of taste and estimation is peculiar to the bigots of this sect, who respect none of those qualities which the rest of mankind have agreed to reverence. Principles, political or religious, are nothing in their reckoning. The Reformation, the Restoration, and the Revolution, are with them mere dates, and nothing else. I have known a whole series of *Arminian* Divines exchanged for '*a hairy woman playing on the harpsichord*,' and the venerable head of *Calvin* basely bartered for *dumb Jack*; nay, if *Tiddy Doll* could be purchased

by the *Long Parliament*, there are many who would think it an excellent bargain. The most learned of our Prelates cannot sometimes stand in competition with *Hugh Peters;* and those *Illustrators* will often prefer conspirators to loyal subjects, for no reason that I can conceive, unless that they are ready *beheaded* to their hand. One of them, as a great favour, shewed me the other day a head of '*Esop of Eton, the drunken, funking, rhyming cobler.*' And what do you suppose, Mr. Projector, had he given for this worthy personage? I tremble while I write it—but the price of this drunken, funking, rhyming cobler, was three of Queen *Mary's Martyrs*, two *Geneva Reformers*, six *Oxford Founders*, *Archbishop Cranmer*, and a head that once belonged to Charles I.

"Such are some of the practices of this sect. And now I leave it to be determined by your readers, whether they do not deserve to be taken into very serious consideration. I have furnished you with the *data*, and I hope you will make a proper use of them.

"I am, Sir,

Your humble servant,

ANTI-GUILLOTINE."

The length of my correspondent's letter will necessarily prevent my offering many remarks on the subject of it in this paper. The growing evil has not escaped my observation, although, what my correspondent terms a sect and a conspiracy, I am rather inclined to think is a *disease;* and I freely confess I myself have not been without some smart attacks of it, however I may have endeavoured to keep it down. The disease is very well known, principally under the name of *a Granger;* it is a vast *gathering*, and the characteristic symptom is a reluctance in the patient to have it *dispersed.* I know a very worthy young man who was seized with it a few months ago, and is a deplorable instance of its power. I shall, perhaps, relate his unhappy case in a future paper.

THE PROJECTOR. Nº 3.

Ira furor brevis est. Animum rege, qui nisi paret
Imperat: hunc frenis, hunc tu compesce catenâ.
HOR.

March 1802.

THE principal characteristic of the family of the PROJECTORS, to which, however unworthy, I have the honour to belong, is equality of temper. Whether this has arisen from philosophy or constitution, whether we have suppressed our angry passions, or were born without them, must be left to conjecture; but, after carefully inspecting our history, I do not find an instance upon record of any of my ancestors having been ruffled by cross accidents, or these little trials of perplexity and vexation which so frequently destroy good-humour. I account it, therefore, a great happiness to be allied to a family of this description: for, after we have made a fair and liberal estimate of all the blessings of life, of rank, title, and wealth, we must at last give the preference to cheerfulness.

By what means we have secured this advantage in perpetuity, will probably appear in the course of these lucubrations: in the mean time, however, to prevent erroneous speculations, I desire it may be remembered that the family motto is *contentus parvo;* that the world has never been very lavish in its honours or rewards; and that Projectors have generally been a despised order of men: and, to make curiosity still more anxious to know how we have contrived to preserve this valuable inheritance, undiminished by extravagance, forfeiture, or mortgage, I must farther add that some of us have been engaged in law-suits, some have lived in a state of dependence, and some have been married.

As every man, who possesses any advantage, and is, at the same time, not of a niggardly disposition, naturally desires to impart it to others; so, among the many Projects on which my time has been employed, is to be found the outline of a scheme for the regulation of temper; but I am sorry to add, that after trying numberless experiments, I have not been able to bring it to such perfection as either to justify me in applying for a patent to sell, or encourage me to seek a remuneration for disclosing the secret.

Some Projectors, engaged in the same undertaking, have begun by laying it down as a maxim, that a good temper may be acquired against the bent of nature, and accordingly have proposed certain rules to promote equanimity and expel peevishness. But as these rules have been chiefly recommended to the young (who are not, by the bye, the greatest delinquents in this respect,) we cannot always be certain that they have succeeded. There is, at least, an equal chance that they may have been employed on dispositions which did not require their aid, and which they rather encouraged than formed: and thus, as in the case of some medical prescriptions, the reputation of the physician has arisen, not so much from the cure, as the absence of the disease.

It appears to me extremely doubtful whether any instructions can be given with success for the regulation of the temper in *grown gentlemen*, or for abating that irritability which appears on sudden and trifling provocations, and "puts them out of temper." This last expression, with others in colloquial use, seems to imply that temper is removeable by accident, and returnable by degrees; and it is certain that, from observing the various periods of its duration or absence, we learn to class the

various kinds of good, or very good, bad, or very bad, tempers, with their several subdivisions. It has been observed, indeed, that mankind pay so much attention to this article, as never to use the word temper without an epithet.

That a good temper forms a very popular character, we know from the efforts made to counterfeit it. Hypocrisy is a compliment which the wicked are doomed to pay to almost every virtue. MOROSUS, whose pride and bad temper are in very close union, nevertheless puts on a most engaging manner, with a splendid suit of cloaths, when he goes abroad. Common observers, therefore, set him down for a man of a sweet temper and independent fortune, while his more intimate acquaintance know that his temper is not natural, and that his cloaths are not paid for: both are provided for state and shew, and are of no use but on a formal visit or a holiday.

Since it is, then, very easy for some persons to endue themselves with a good temper, we must regret that such exhibitions are only temporary trials of skill, and that so many pleasing acts are not, by more frequent exhibition, connected into a regular habit. From this consideration, I have always recommended

that good temper (like any other quality in which we wish to excel *abroad*) should be first practised at *home*. Home would be an excellent school for it: a wife, children, and servants, are very good judges of the article; and when they have once declared it to be perfect and durable, it may be tried out of doors with assurance of success, and require no formal preparation. Such is the advice which I have frequently given; but, confident as I am of its importance, I am sorry I cannot at present produce many well-attested cases of its having been taken.

That truly-eminent Projector, the Author of the Spectator, in one of his excellent schemes, proposes an *hospital* for men out of humour: but it may be questioned whether this description of patients would submit, in their cross paroxysms, to any thing short of force: and it is at the same time to be hoped, that although fits of ill-humour are very severe, they would rarely last so long as to survive the necessary preliminaries to a removal. I am doubtful likewise whether, in the present state of things, the publick could support the vast expence of building which this would require, an expence which is at least trebled since the Spectator's days, principally, I am told, by that ingenious

system of *surveyorship*, of which Inigo Jones and Sir Christopher Wren were deplorably ignorant. And, farther, if this expence were to be imposed by Act of Parliament, it would probably occasion that dreadful dilemma, where "the cure is worse than the disease." If we wish to bring people into good-humour, it must be a very bad step to apply first to their pockets.

Where, however, we cannot absolutely remedy a disorder, our next attempt is to render it as little hurtful as possible. I have, therefore, sometimes thought of a compromise between men of ill-humour and the rest of society; in compliance with which, the first of these high contracting parties shall be allowed to retain their spleen unmolested, provided they consent to shut themselves up in their apartments, and make no attempt to bring their complaints and their discontent into company. It is surely very fair that they who have any disorder upon them should be prevented from infecting their neighbours; and ill-humour, it has often been found, is so remarkably contagious, that one person, coming suddenly into a room during the fit, has been known to give it to ten others who had not a symptom of the disorder before he made his

approach. No species of quarantine, therefore, ought to be deemed too strict, to prevent the spreading of so malignant a disease, nor ought the infected to complain if they are prohibited from conveying a plague which men are most apt to catch when the pores of the mind are open, in the hours of convivial relaxation, and when the circulation of the blood is probably quickened by repeatedly swallowing short petitions for the good of their country.

This infection, moreover, produces evils of a very conspicuous nature, such as may be seen and felt; for, although it is primarily a disease of the mind, we often see it affect the body, by redness of countenance, swelling and blackness about the eyes, extraordinary elongation of the face, and sometimes violent bleeding at the nose, as if produced by the stroke of a fist. Some have had their teeth loosened, when the disorder was at a great height, and some their limbs broken. It was not long since, that a person of considerable character and consequence in the world, seized with this malady, and imprudently going into company when the fit was upon him, fell upon the floor of a tavern as if he had been knocked down; and another of the same company, who was observed to sit very near him, had part of his

scull laid open, as if a quart bottle had been thrown at his head. In some very violent fits of the disorder it has been found necessary to call in the opinion of the best judges, which is attended with very great expence, and other damages and inconveniences which, a reasonable man would think, ought to prevent the infected from going abroad so often as they do.

It is, however, an unfortunate property in this disorder, that the patient is always desirous of change of place, and of removing the distemper from where it is to where it never ought to be. One man, for example, has had a dispute with his wife (which, I know not why, almost always brings on a fit of ill-humour), and, having a surplus of peevishness left on hand, carries it into company, as to a mart for goods of that kind. Another has been forced to submit to the airs and imperious demands of a mistress, and thinks proper to revenge the cause of *keeping* on the first person he meets, as a gamester, who has been unsuccessful at the faro-table, considers it no sin to repair his losses on the highway. One has been deceived in the character of a person to whom he lent money, and consoles himself by finding fault with those who owe him none. Another complains bitterly of his wife, his

children, his servant, his cook, his dinner, and his wines, when the real source of the evil, if he had had the candour to acknowledge it, would have been found upon 'Change, or in the Discount Office. The oddest circumstance I remember of this kind of transfer, was in the case of my neighbour Mrs. Tattle, who caught the disorder in a dispute with the box-keeper at the theatre, and vented it next morning on the pew-opener at church. She represented the mislaying of her hassock as a terrible crime; alas! she was thinking of a front row on the Prince's side.

Such being the practice of patients afflicted with ill-humour, I hope we are not requiring too much, when we require that, in the first place, they shall be conscious that they have lost their temper; and, secondly, that they shall not seek it where it is not to be found; that they shall rank ill-humour, when only accidental, among those diseases which are a sufficient excuse for declining invitations to company; and that it shall not hereafter be thought more prudent to excuse themselves, upon account of a bad cold, than a bad temper.

Should this compromise be agreed to, it will not be necessary for the parties who are to plead the statute of sulkiness, to puzzle their

brains in order to find out new forms of cards and compliments. The same models of polite excuses will answer in this, as in common cases, where rheumatisms, violent colds, head-achs, and other names for dislike, or previous engagements, are specified. And I hope that we shall soon have to place such notes as the following upon our weekly files.

"Mr. HASTY returns his compliments to Messrs. ——, and hopes they will excuse his attendance to-night, as he is exceedingly out of humour."

"Mrs. SPADILLE's best compliments to her dear Mrs. PONTO; would gladly have joined her agreeable party, but was so completely put out of temper last night by an abominable run of cards, that she has not been herself since."

"Mr. BLUNDER's compliments to Mr. DEMURR: is sorry he cannot meet him to-night at the coffee-house, as in crossing Temple-terrace about noon he fell into a ridiculous mistake, and lost his temper."

"Miss GADABOUT returns compliments to Mrs. and Miss JAUNTLY; would have been happy to accompany them to the Opera, but would think the dances and singing shocking, as she has been just put out of patience by her

father's refusing to subscribe to the new theatre."

"Mrs. TEAZLE is extremely sorry she cannot comply with Lady BETTY's polite invitation, as she has had some words with Mr. TEAZLE about the suit of lace, which renders her incapable of giving any civil answer but the present."

"Mr. SNEAK's compliments to the CLUB; cannot possibly meet them to-night, as he has just had a tiff with Mrs. SNEAK, and does not wish to disturb the whole company."

Excuses like these will no doubt appear rather singular; but what is there that custom will not sanction? And when was custom better employed than in the service of such candid confessions? When any thing odd, whimsical, and extravagant, in dress or manners, is invented, there are always some persons of consequence to give it currency; and my scheme, which surely has higher claims to patronage, requires only to be adopted by a dozen or two of the strangest tempers in the polita end of the town, if they can possibly overcome their prejudices against solitary confinement. It will then of course find its way into the city, and perhaps, in time, diminish the virulence

of that spleen which is now very improperly discharged on the helpless and unoffending.

Although Projectors have generally been thought too selfishly partial to their own schemes, to listen to those of others, that failing, I must in justice say, does not adhere to our family; and as a proof, I shall conclude this paper with some notice of the project of an ingenious physician in the West, who has lately invented an air-pump, if I may so call it, for the brain. This gentleman, after many experiments, has at length contrived, by dint of air only, to oblige people to be merry, laugh outright, and declare themselves extremely happy, without knowing why or wherefore. I must regret, however, that this discovery has not yet been made sufficiently public. An hundred and twenty miles is too long a journey for an hour's happiness; and it were to be wished the ingenious contriver would enable the public at large, who might purchase his machines, to pump in a little felicity whenever their occasions demanded it. Yet, confined as this discovery is at present, I look upon it to be one of the most important ever made, not only to individuals, but to large bodies, communities, corporations, &c. As it has the singular property of forcing people to laugh, the managers

of public amusements would soon see the necessity of erecting one in each house, capable of operating on the whole audience. As to private families, it is incredible how much good might be done by occasional infusions of good-humour, in promoting the happiness of husbands and wives, and lessening the fatigues of proctors and special juries. It may be doubted whether it would not even save the SPEAKER of a certain great assembly some unpleasant necessities, and render the *call to order* less frequent, by enabling him to throw a placid air to whatever side of the House there appeared the mist of party and the lour of opposition. I therefore beg leave to recommend this scheme to the honour it deserves; and I long for its extension, and the happy day when foreigners shall rejoice to breathe in the facetious atmosphere of Old England.

Good-humour is at present in such high demand, that any Project for its increase must be listened to with eager approbation. It would perhaps be of more use to literature than is commonly imagined, and again be acknowledged a characteristic of wisdom. But at present, I am sorry to say it, disputes are generally carried on with far more asperity than the subject demands, and some have oddly enough

contrived to vent those passions by the pen, which were formerly considered as the exclusive privilege of the tongue. Time and attention could not be better employed than in devising a remedy for this evil; and, as I am not wholly without hopes that a considerable progress may be made by joint efforts in this design, I shall take an early opportunity to offer some hints on the passions of the pen, the bigotry of liberality, and the intemperance of sober discussion.

THE PROJECTOR. N° 4.

> "Nec te quæsiveris extra.
> Nam Romæ quis non? Ah si fas dicere!"
>
> PERSIUS.

April 1802.

GREAT as the rejoicings are for the restoration of peace, there are some sober and serious persons among us, who will neither be so deafened by the guns, or blinded with the lights, as not to revolve the consequences that

may ensue from entering into bonds of amity and fellowship with a nation, not the most remarkable of late upon account of its religious or moral character; and I am informed from all quarters that we are now in imminent danger of being inundated with French follies and vices. I confess this is an opinion to which I cannot subscribe; yet, as the grounds of the apprehension deserve our most serious consideration, I shall have performed a very acceptable service if any thing that follows can tend to alleviate it, and to prove that our fears may be kept at home for our own use.

I do not scruple to repeat that I am not of the number of those who dread an inundation of follies, as a necessary consequence of the peace with France. I consider the commerce of national follies in the same light as any other species of commerce. No nation will take more of an article from another nation than it wants; and no nation will venture to export a greater quantity than there is a demand for. I know that alarms prevail respecting the manufactures of France; it is said that the French are an ingenious people, and that, enjoying a fertile soil, with low rents and cheap provisions, they will be able to carry our manufactures as well as their own, to such

a degree of perfection, both as to quality and price, as to be able to undersell us in our own markets. And, therefore, it is apprehended that, among other necessaries, they will be able to stock us with follies and vices of a much genteeler *fabrique*, and better calculated for fashion, show, and wear, than our own. Or if they are not really so, such is the predilection for every thing of foreign growth among a certain class of people, that it is feared patterns of silks and laces will not be more frequently brought over than samples of iniquity and models of licentiousness.

But although it be very true that there are in this country too many who give an unfair and absurd preference to foreign manufactures, and encourage smuggling, to the great detriment of the revenue and of the honest trader, yet, as we have of late years been rather more out of humour with the French than during any former war, I hope we have pride enough left to refuse being dictated to by any nation whatever, in the shape, turn, twist, or fold, of our morals, and that we will (if only for a moment, which will be quite sufficient,) consider the absurdity of laying out our money in foreign markets, for commodities which we may purchase at our own doors of equal quality

and durability. To suppose that the French have monopolized all kinds of folly is really conceding too much; it is a mean distrust in our own talents; because there is no absolute proof of the fact, and there are many reasons to think that it is a mere piece of vanity, spread abroad by that people who, forsooth, would not be thought inferior to the nations of Europe in any respect.

Now I, as a true-born Briton of the old school, cannot suffer my country to be run down in this manner; and therefore declare that I am not afraid of any inundation of French follies; because I do believe, and indeed I am greatly mistaken if I do not clearly perceive, that we are able and willing to furnish a quantity of the said follies more than sufficient for our own consumption, that is, more than we want, or have the least occasion for; and consequently there is not any reason to suspect that the course of exchange will be long against us in this particular branch of commerce. But as I must not be accused of dealing in vague assertions, and would avoid the national vanity I have just censured, and as this is a matter which seems to press for immediate consideration, and engrosses a large portion of our table-talk, I shall endeavour to

state a few leading articles in the trade of folly and vice, to prove that as far as they are desirable, and deserving to be manufactured or cultivated, we have no occasion whatever to buy or borrow of our neighbours, or to send that money out of the country which may be spent as profitably, or perhaps more so, within it.

If, as is commonly said, one of the principal follies of the day be *mis-spent time*, I cannot but think we have carried that art to a very high degree of perfection, and must deem those persons very unreasonable who would go abroad in quest of means to get rid of time idly and expeditiously, when there are at home so many tempting and inviting articles to be procured every morning and every night. Not to speak of public amusements, which are common to all, and which, as now conducted by managers and authors of wonderful taste and invention, are remarkable good wasters of time, it must be obvious that our domestic engagements are every day, I should, perhaps, say every night, becoming better and better calculated to destroy this enemy, time: and what with balls, assemblies, routs, concerts, auctions, trips and tours, and card parties, I should suppose it might be proved by arith-

metic that the consumption of time has amazingly increased of late years in this country, and in a ratio far exceeding that of any necessary or luxury that can be mentioned. This would appear very evident if we would only follow a practice common enough in other cases, that of setting down in a book what we spend daily. But, unluckily, time is an article of which very few of us take an account, and which we cannot therefore exhibit in figures; and not being yet considered by Government as an article productive to the state, we can obtain no information by referring to the books of the Customs or Excise.

I have mentioned cards among other great sources of the consumption of time; and, perhaps, it would be difficult to find another equally common and extensive, especially if we take into account dice, pharo, and other articles which are modifications of the same, and which are admirably calculated for the faculties of those who use them, being, like certain elementary treatises, "adapted to the meanest understandings." When, however, the time these consume is fairly estimated, or calculated only in the gross (and I am ready to take the lowest calculation any of my readers shall be pleased to offer), I should really be

glad to know whether there can exist the smallest necessity of having recourse to France for fresh supplies, or whether, on the contrary, we ought not to pack up and send abroad the surplus of our own stock? This is not a vague reverie of my own: I appeal to men who know cyphers; I appeal to the disciples of Cocker and Dilworth.

Another folly (as some call it, though others reckon it a vice) is, a contempt for the duties and comforts of the married state, ending in what is very shortly expressed by the two well-known abbreviations, *crim. con.* I hope I run no risk of contradiction, when I assert that this article has of late years increased both in quantity and quality, and is quite sufficient for our wants. Of its goodness, the publick are fully enabled to judge, from those admirable specimens which it is become the fashion to exhibit three or four times a year in Westminster and Guildhall, places selected from the peculiar strong light they throw upon such articles. A man must have a very mean opinion of the ingenuity of his fellow-countrymen, who would venture to say that any foreigner can do more than claim damages for the crime which he commits himself avowedly, either by keeping a mistress in the next street, or by making

his house a genteeler sort of brothel. What can any French husband do more than break his wife's heart? And as to the art and skill of performing that great feat, why should we be indebted to foreign instructions when it may be so easily accomplished in our own way, by placing a strumpet at the same table with a wife, and compelling virtue not only to associate with, but even be subservient to vice? I do not affect to know all that our ingenious neighbours on the Continent have done, or can do, but I should suppose they have never accomplished any purpose of the kind more neatly and genteelly than this; and which I am the more inclined to quote in favour of my argument, because an instance of this way of heart-breaking occurred so recently as probably to be in the remembrance of most of my readers.

Indeed, with respect to the abolition of domestic comforts, although I do not say that in all respects we have attained perfection, certainly the progress we have made is so great as to merit the full praise of such attempts, and ought to make us look at home, before we bestow labour and money in acquiring the arts of other countries. That excellent contrivance, for example, of preferring, in affairs of courtship, contiguity of estates to sympathy of

affection; can any thing be better calculated to give (high) life and spirit to matrimony? and instead of looking for the charms of a fair one in her person or temper, how much more wise and expeditious to consult that wonderful discerner of the thoughts of men, the office* for the three *per cent.* consolidated annuities! And then, as to personal enjoyments, the dread of retirement, or of being alone, may be safely said to be as well understood in this country as it can be in any part of Europe; and with respect to the dangers our children are exposed to from improper amusements or company, I flatter myself, we are not greatly behind the most highly favoured nations. As to fops, fools, jilts, and demireps, if I thought there was any danger of a scarcity, I should certainly be the first to propose a bounty on the importation; but I am convinced there are plenty in the country, even if we were not to manufacture a single article of the kind for ten years to come.

Extravagant expences is a commodity of which, I am aware, considerable dread is entertained. But, after a close investigation of the subject, and many inquiries into the dissipation of finances in foreign countries, I cannot think that our ingenuity is capable of re-

ceiving any very important addition. Where the intention is to be ruined with our eyes open, the only difference that can possibly take place must be in the quickness of dispatch; and whether we shall be ruined a few days sooner or later (for this is not a question of months or years) is surely a matter of no great consequence, or at least it need not alarm our fears to such a degree as some people affect. We have carried genteel embarrassments and polite distresses to great perfection; our contempt for independence and moderation is ably supported; and the manufacture of excuses, delays, apologies, put-offs, and other enemies to stamped receipts, is certainly in a very flourishing state; a circumstance which I should not advance on my own knowledge, if I could not appeal to the books of many very creditable artificers and shopkeepers. The French may be good *haters*, because they have lately been taught to swear hatred to this and that obnoxious article; but I question whether, with their utmost ingenuity, they can exhibit specimens of aversion to pay-day more perfect than occur among us.

But, according to my information, the principal fear entertained is on account of an expected inundation of irreligious principles.

Here I quit the very positive tone I have hitherto held, and must confess that something is to be conceded to the superior ingenuity of our neighbours; and therefore I allow that a certain degree of fear may be encouraged. Still, if we are proud of such things, I do not see much reason for despondence: and I would not altogether give up a point which is the parent of all the others I have been mentioning. Let us only reflect on the many able writings of our own new Philosophers, male and female, which have appeared within these few years; and it will, I think, be allowed, that we have at least endeavoured to propagate irreligion with as much industry and vigour as any nation upon earth. If we have not succeeded, if neither our soil nor our dispositions were fitted for the purpose, the blame does not rest with the able artists to whom I allude: they exerted their utmost skill in composing and their utmost zeal in disseminating infidelity enough for our own consumption, and which would have rendered us independent of foreign aid, if the people had taken kindly to the article. But the reason why we think the foreign manufactory more valuable is, that such principles happened to be in great demand abroad for certain purposes which could not be executed without them; and upon that

account, and that alone, our neighbours deserve the credit of having carried them to a high degree of perfection, which, after all, was no higher than such principles naturally tend to carry themselves. But that they were the original inventors of them, or deserve the praise of ingenuity, I never will allow, while the names of Hobbes, Bolingbroke, and Hume, are held in remembrance.

I might now mention some other articles, in the manufacture of which our countrymen show an ambition to excel; and perhaps the very recent attempt to establish a midnight theatre might be brought as no inconsiderable proof; but I trust I have said enough to illustrate my principal position. The subject, indeed, is somehow or other not very pleasant to me, and the task I have performed is rather of necessity than inclination. Perhaps too my readers may not relish it much more than myself. Dry discussions on matters of trade cannot be agreeable to the majority: and, in truth, after I have taken all this trouble to vindicate the ingenuity of my countrymen of a certain class, and to prove that the course of exchange of follies between the two countries in question is at, or very nearly *at par*, I am by no means desirous of complimenting their skill at the expence of their better qualities, nor of having

it thought that I am an *amateur*, or a dealer in the articles I have enumerated. I see daily a number of curious and ingenious articles in shops, which I think superfluous, and the manufacture of which seems not less a waste of time, than the purchase of them is a waste of money. Exactly so is it with me in respect to the articles I have now considered. So far am I from glorying in our proficiency, in our successful rivalship, and in the great show we are enabled to make in this Vanity-fair, as honest John Bunyan calls it, that I most fervently wish we had been obliged to import every article from foreign countries, and at a price, or saddled with *duties*, that would have amounted to a prohibition: and I should, whatever other people may think, esteem myself the first of PROJECTORS, could I invent a code of laws that would effectually prevent the use of them; for I have been long of opinion, that one principal source of happiness, whatever air of a negative it may have, is to be CONTENT with the UNAVOIDABLE miseries of human life. This subject often employs my meditations; but so limited are the human faculties, that I do not expect to be able to do more than throw out occasional hints in the course of these my lucubrations.

THE PROJECTOR. Nº 5.

"Maxima pars hominum morbo jactatur eodem." Hor.

May 1802.

It has been usual with my predecessors, before they have been known to the publick so long as I have had that honour, to give a very flattering account of their progress with the town, the excellent effects their Projects have produced, and the great multitude of correspondents who are panting for early notice. In all these respects, however, they had advantages which I cannot possess. Some of them appeared weekly, some twice or thrice a week, and some daily: they could thus provide places for temporary subjects without inconvenience, and attend to the importunities of their correspondents with quicker dispatch than the author of the Projector, who, by the constitution of his vehicle, is necessarily confined to twelve, or at most thirteen lucubrations in a year. For this reason, although it would be rude in any one to doubt that I have been favoured with an unusual flow of correspondence,

and that Mr. Urban's knocker has been for some months kept in a state of perpetual motion, I must advertise my good friends that a very early notice of their hints cannot be taken, unless in cases of peculiar urgency; and that those who do not consult times and seasons in their communications, must be content to wait their regular turns. I therefore inform GULOSUS, that his paper on "The Festivities of Christmas" cannot have a place for half a year to come, and that the "Philosophical Remarks on the gloomy month of November" are necessarily postponed until the conclusion of the Dog-days. I would also intimate to AGRICOLA, that his observations on the excellence of the harvest are premature; and although it be extremely rude to make a lady wait, I cannot give any opinion of the affair between LUCINDA and COLONEL SCAPEGRACE in less than nine months from the date of her letter.

As to Poetry, since it does not belong to my department (although Poets from their want of success may aspire to rank with Projectors), I shall in general consign every thing of that kind to the care and criticism of my esteemed friend Mr. Urban: but in the mean time, if it be not taking the pen out of his

hand, I would briefly suggest to Poets in general the attention I have just now recommended to "times and seasons." *Winter* pieces do not suit with the months of *June* and *July*, and Odes to the *Sun* sometimes smell a little too much of the *lamp*. I am a great friend to *impromptus*, when they are not too much laboured; but I forbid all *extempores* that are copied from old authors. As to lines on the Spring, the Harvest, and the Autumn; while an author's first object is to consult his genius for a choice of apt similes, metaphors, and other decorations, I would not have him wholly regardless of that useful instrument the thermometer. Indeed, I have a project in my head of composing a table of Poetry, somewhat on the plan of our calendars, including objects fixed and moveable, and all those grand topics which may be considered as red-letter days with the votaries of the Muses, in order that young beginners may not mistake "the lesson of the day," and display their talents on burning skies and sultry heats, at a time when their readers are obliged to be cased in fleecy hosiery. Such a table, I am persuaded, would prevent those early springs and premature winters which render the climate of Parnassus so

extremely variable: nor, I hope, would the proposed restrictions be thought too rigorous, as there are many other subjects which are proper at all times, and "keep good in all weathers." Verses, for example, to a lady's eyebrow, her tippet, her lap-dog, or her parrot, may do in winter as well as in summer: and lines on Priscilla "stepping into a coach," or "reading a book," or "frowning," or "smiling," or "buying a straw bonnet," will suit any variety of weather. But I forget that I am advising those who are not within my jurisdiction; and I should not have said so much, if it had not been to introduce the above Project, which, if well executed, will be, I humbly flatter myself, one of the first improvements of this ingenious age. And now I proceed to the more immediate subject of this paper.

Looking over one of Mr. Urban's late Magazines, I was amused by a Latin epitaph on a young man, of whom it is there said "*obiit secundum artem*," or, in our vulgar English, he "died of the Doctor." This little incident suggested to me many reflections on the blessing of health, of which, it appears, some take so much care as to pass to the very extreme they wish to avoid; and it led me also to

consider a subject which I doubt not my readers will think very seasonable at the approach of summer.

Of those who are in the pursuit of happiness, a considerable number seem to be divided in opinion; some inclining to *health*, and some to *wealth*, as the prime source of felicity. They seem guided in this matter by the jingle of the words, and, as in a few other cases, more by rhyme than reason; for surely nothing but the preference of sound to sense would ever incline any person to suppose a necessary connexion between two objects that have nothing in common, except the abuse to which they are liable. The majority, however, are inclined to think that health is really of more consequence than riches; and I am therefore surprised at the complaint brought by certain persons, that "mankind are careless of this invaluable blessing." Wherever I look around me, I see so many proofs of a contrary disposition, that I must attribute the imputation of this neglect to the prejudices of that part of the faculty who determine that no man can be healthy "without taking something." Or, perhaps, it may arise from a superficial observation of the conduct of a considerable part of mankind, who not only take wonderful care of

their health, but have ingeniously contrived to make health and luxury go hand in hand, or, as some think, to create a new kind of health, with which no pleasure shall be incompatible.

But, from whatever source this notion may have arisen, it is certainly not confirmed by facts. On the other hand, the most remarkable proof of general attention to health may be demonstrated at this very time. It is well known that in the course of the present, and more particularly of the next month, the plague makes its appearance in the metropolis, and exerts its ravages to such an extent, that the roads are covered with families and individuals flying from it, some fifty, sixty, or seventy miles to the sea-coast, where it has no power. People neglectful of health would not take a step which is notoriously known to be very expensive and inconvenient. Of what nature this plague is, physicians either are, or affect to be, ignorant. Perhaps the London faculty may not think it worth while to study a disorder for which they have no opportunity of prescribing. It is certainly, however, in one respect different from all other disorders, inasmuch as it rages during the finest, and what we account the most healthy weather,

and on the other hand is checked by a rainy or cold season, or that kind of weather in which it is impossible to enjoy either air or exercise. About the time specified, the symptoms make their first appearance; they generally attack persons in the most perfect health, the young, robust, and beautiful, in the shape of coughs, colds, tendencies to asthmas, consumption, want of appetite, and listlessness. The patients despair of life if they are not speedily removed; and it would appear as if nature dictated this remedy, for they often become furious and unmanageable, if it be delayed. Another distinctive characteristic of this plague is, perhaps, more singular than that already noticed, namely, that it most infests those families that are in prosperous circumstances, and may consequently command every comfort in life. When very violent, or of long continuance, however, it does not always leave them so; but still it is pretty accurately ascertained that the poor and the labouring sort know nothing of it. Nor is it very common among industrious shopkeepers, parochial clergy, authors, or other handicraftsmen.

The cause of this plague, like all others, is evidently in the air of the metropolis; and this as evidently indicates the cure to be a speedy

removal to some more hospitable and healthy spot, several of which, fortunately for the lives of his Majesty's subjects, have been discovered on the coasts of Kent and Sussex; and what makes it yet more certain that it is the air of *London*, and that only, which creates the disorder, is, that it is never cured even in those temples of Hygeia until they be crowded almost to suffocation; a circumstance which, it is well known, would be reckoned fatal in the metropolis.

It is a disorder of the most cruel nature, sparing neither age nor sex. The fair part of the creation are particularly liable to catch it; and they impart it to their parents; who are naturally inclined to listen to the complaints of their tender offspring, and remove them from the pestilential air that threatens to bereave them of every comfort. Where the remedy is neglected, I have known the disorder end in confirmed poutings, lowness of spirits, alarming fits of crying, and total loss of temper. On the contrary, all the symptoms have abated, as if by the influence of a charm, on the sight of a post-chaise, or a cabin not much larger than a post-chaise.

Another proof that the disease is in the *air* of the metropolis, I just now recollect, as it

was communicated to me by an eminent sea-doctor; and that is, the patients, when removed to their favourite place of destination, never make any change in diet, dress, or other circumstances of living, except what some would think for the worse, such as later hours, and fewer conveniencies of lodging and accommodation, than when at home. But so great are the improvements made in appetite, that the patient can very soon eat any thing placed before him, and loses much of that fastidious taste about diet and wines, which is so common in London. This, no doubt, may sometimes produce a degree of scarcity, and its usual attendant, dearness; but this is never, as in the metropolis, a subject of complaint, because every one is convinced that too high a price cannot be paid for health; an opinion in which the resident inhabitants of the place have the good sense to concur.

I have been the more particular in collecting these circumstances relative to this plague, because a strange prejudice has gone abroad, that London has never been infested with the plague since the year 1665. What could give rise to such a notion, I shall not stop to inquire; but that it is without foundation must be obvious to every sympathising mind who considers the

matter of fact. That it is not quite so fatal now as at the period above cited may be granted. The vast number of 68,000 is given in the Bills of Mortality for 1665; but from pretty accurate information, upon the average of the last ten years (much of it a time of *war* too), I reckon that not less than 20,000 are *carried off* annually by this plague; and surely this is not an inconsiderable number. It is truly melancholy at this season to call at the houses of our departed friends, and ask for father, mother, son, or daughter, and to hear nothing but the doleful answer, "They are all *gone*, Sir!"

With regard to the termination of the disease, it is various in various years, because, as already observed, it depends on the weather. It begins to disappear when the cold and rain come on, and decreases in proportion to their severity and duration. Some cases of it, however, have occurred even in the winter, when the patients are sent to the Sussex coast; but these I take to be rare, and confined chiefly to persons of high fashion, who live huddled together in *routs*, and are very poorly provided with cloathing fitted for the season.

As soon as the disorder begins to decrease, and the metropolis, from the additions of wind,

rain, cold, and smoke, becomes fit to breathe in, the patients return home, some with considerable precipitation, in consequence of increased strength, and some so greatly improved in health, that no farther aid is necessary towards complete recovery than what may be furnished from the stores of Apothecaries' hall. Such, likewise, is the efficacy of this locomotive cure, that several patients, who were obliged to be carried in postchaises, have returned home the whole way on foot, to the great astonishment of all beholders; and I have been told that a few of the more active and lively sort have actually run the first five or six miles without ever stopping, or wishing to be stopt.

At what time this plague first appeared, may be a fit subject for historical inquiry. It certainly did not immediately succeed the old plague, for there was an interval of at least sixty years or more, during which we have no account how it was possible for people to exist in London. Within the last fifty years, however, it has been gaining ground, and has now put on the regular appearances I have enumerated. Before I quit the subject, I cannot help mentioning that some speculative persons have endeavoured to account for its attacking people in good circumstances in this way, that "they

only can *afford* it." This is a very strange opinion; and I give it as I received it, without pretending to unravel its hidden mystery. One may afford a jaunt, or afford to throw away money, or afford to be idle, or afford to neglect business, at least there is no grammatical impropriety in such expressions; but to afford a disease, to cheapen an illness, or pay handsomely for a plague, are paradoxes far above my limited comprehension.

By the history of this disorder, I have now vindicated the age from the imputation of carelessness in the article of health; but justice compels me to say, that there are exceptions, as there are to every other general rule. Some persons give a kind of preference to indisposition, and, though it may appear a quibble, are never so well as when they are not well at all. Undoubtedly, in many cases, diseases have their uses. To some they supply a very fertile source of conversation, and are as productive of debate and discussion as the news of the day. I have known a rheumatism on the shoulder take more time in description than a battle on the Rhine; and some of the best speeches in Parliament have been cut short by the detail of a tooth-ache. Foreign affairs are often obliged to give way to inward complaints;

and a colic, well told, has not unfrequently diverted the horrors of intestine war. Elderly ladies are extremely partial to certain disorders, and never visit without a body-full of aches and spasms for the entertainment and edification of the company. To politicians the annals of the cabinet may be valuable, but they are nothing in competition with the histories of the bedchamber. Whoever pays his court to an *amateur* of pain, must expect to be closeted for an hour or two; and I have a maiden aunt, whom for certain reasons I think proper to visit, who is very picturesque in the description of sickness. In her young days she had a tolerable knack at a bad cold; but her *forte* at present is the rheumatism, in which she is perhaps rather prolix, but, by frequent repetition, eminently perspicuous. I never leave the good old lady without a deep conviction on my mind of the efficacy of *Daffy*, and the infallibility of *guiacum*.

There is another class, who cherish disorders by way of excuse for certain omissions; and here the range is considerably extensive, as it takes in all public speakers. Singers generally are attached to colds; and some clergymen, I know not why, are said to be liable once a week to sore throats. Nor are diseases

of less importance to tradesmen, some of whom are so ill that they cannot keep an appointment, and others so feeble that they cannot write a draft. I shall not dwell longer on these cases however, as I am not quite certain that they are within the reach of the faculty. All I shall add is, that, if a disorder of this kind be not very painful, it is, in the opinion of the world, A VERY BAD SYMPTOM.

THE PROJECTOR. Nº 6.

——— "Matres
Fœmineum clamorem ad cœli sidera tollunt:
Qui cursu portas primi irrupere patentes,
Hos inimica super mixto premit agmine TURBA.
Nec miseram effugiunt mortem: sed limine in ipso,
Mœnibus in patriis, atque inter tuta domorum
Confixi expirant animos." VIRG.

June 1802.

IT will doubtless be accounted a very flattering circumstance, that my fourth paper has procured me the favour of a class of men with whom I have had but few opportunities of

becoming acquainted, whom I have hitherto viewed at a respectful distance, and who will yet perhaps be rather the subjects of my contemplation than intimacy; I mean, the men of pleasure about the town, whose employment it is to act up to the principles laid down in the abovementioned paper, who struggle, by repeated projects of unquestionable originality and powerful attraction, to vindicate the ingenuity of our country, and who emulate with success the gaieties and licentiousness of a French metropolis. Those of this class, who have become my correspondents, profess a readiness to confirm what I have, more from speculation than experience, ventured to assert, and to prove that it is not necessary to visit the Continent, if our only object be the pursuit of follies that may contribute either to the waste of time or money. As every man must be naturally pleased to find that his efforts have been successful, and that his endeavours have been understood in their intended meaning, I shall make no apology for inserting the following letter; nor, like some of my too modest Fellow-Projectors, be ashamed of the praise it confers.

"TO THE AUTHOR OF THE PROJECTOR.

"SIR,

"I HAVE read your paper in the April Magazine with more pleasure than I expected to reap from speculations founded on the moral plan: and as I perceive that you not only know, but are inclined to apologize for the gay world, I applaud your spirit, and shall be very happy to give you that assistance, of which men like yourself very much stand in need. It has, indeed, always struck me as one of the greatest absurdities in the world, that men professing to be only scholars or moralists, should take upon them to judge of the important concerns of TON and fashion, which must, in the very nature of things, be as much above the comprehension of their minds as beyond the reach of their persons. It is a pretty farce, indeed, to see a fellow who is confined all day amongst a parcel of old books, and who sneaks to bed at eleven o'clock, pretending to write about 'midnight frolics,' and a world which does not begin to live and move until his faculties are suspended in sleep; a man who has not a second change of raiment, censuring or criticising the

varieties of a splendid wardrobe, and talking of 'body,' train, and trimming,' as if they were the furniture of a garret—a man who—but I beg your pardon; I do not mean to be personal. I discover in you, Mr. PROJECTOR (I like your name), a more liberal spirit; and I shall so far honour you for it, as to bestow upon you my private correspondence, and throw such light upon your lucubrations as your lamp cannot furnish.

"Whatever, indeed, I may think of you as a writer, you either deserve some credit as a prophet, or you were led by some accident to choose a very happy time for the subject of your fourth paper. You must have foreseen that, within a very short period, every effort would be made to vindicate the ingenuity of our native country in the manufacture of the articles specified in that paper; and that May and June, the carnival months of London, would exhibit a blaze of unusual brilliancy, enkindled by a spirit of rivalship which I hope will prevent those emigrations so much dreaded in consequence of the peace. The event has, I trust, fully answered your expectation; and I should have left our fêtes, and routs, and balls, and masquerades, to the consequences of their own merit, had I not seen it necessary to obviate some objections,

which ignorance or prejudice has started against them.

"Those who are inclined to admire the number and splendour and utility of our fêtes, and routs, and balls, and masquerades, and hops, and *pic nics*, and public breakfasts, and are convinced that they are powerful rivals to the glories of Paris (be that city ever so glorious), err very egregiously in one particular, in which it is my bounden duty to set them right, and to clear up any misunderstanding that may intercept our progress towards perfection in those truly valuable concerns. What I allude to is, the frequent complaint made of the 'vast numbers' admitted, or at least invited to our routs, more than the places of rendezvous can contain; and the consequent crowding of carriages, blocking-up of streets, and endangering of limbs and lives; so that what Swift said of familiarity with the great may be truly said of a fashionable assembly; it is 'vanity' at first, but ends in 'vexation of spirit.'

"In answer to this, permit me to remark in the first place, that this complaint is a remnant of the old way of thinking, of which we must positively get rid before the auspicious projects which have been formed for the advancement

of national pleasures can be carried into execution. It is founded on the antiquated notion of self-preservation, which is said to be one of the laws of nature, but which it will appear very absurd to retain at a time when the whole code of nature's laws is, by general consent, repealed, and scarcely even the preambles of any of them are to be found, except in the old and neglected writings of your predecessors. But there is another more powerful reason for abolishing this law of self-preservation, which is, that it interferes with a new edict, intituled, the SQUEEZING ACT, according to the letter and spirit of which (and no law has more spirit) every danger of life and limbs, of indecency or dislocation, is to be encountered in the pursuit of pleasure; and according to an amendment lately introduced in the same, it is enacted that in all times henceforward CURIOSITY shall be held and considered as the first law of nature.

" Without, however, accounting for this complaint seriously, or answering it by any pompous display of my legal knowledge, which must be very dry reading, I shall point out in the next place the gross absurdities to which it will lead those who are unhappily prejudiced in its favour. 'The inconveniencies,' say

they, 'of such immense crowds, are drawbacks on the pleasure we should otherwise receive, and tend to remind us rather of the horrors of war than of the restoration of peace; for what can have a more hostile appearance than the stratagems we are under the necessity of practising, to force the narrow defiles and close passages of the streets, or than the many bloody encounters between the heads of the visitors and the poles of the coaches?'

"All this is specious; but it is in reality the prejudice of ignorance; of ignorance, however, I am willing to believe, not so deep-rooted but that a little explanation will set every thing right, and convince those who offer such complaints, that the aforesaid grievances without doors, are really and *bona fide* as component a part of the much-envied entertainment, as what passes within doors.

"In fact, Sir, if you will but consult common sense, you will see how preposterously unfashionable such complaints are. Without bustle, inconvenience, and danger, what would a rout or a masquerade be, but a poor tame-spirited and insipid visit which any man might pay without the least knowledge of the world, without the risk of a speck on his stockings, or the derangement of a single grain of hair-powder,

and without exciting the curiosity of the neighbourhood, or, what is more essential, disturbing their quiet? Can any man who has ever panted in the circles of fashion, suppose that this would satisfy the givers of routs? No; they would despise themselves, if they did not occasion to their friends an incredible degree of anxiety and confusion in trying to get to the place appointed, and if they did not break the rest of an extended district. It is this which constitutes the honour we express by the word *eclat*, which, although I cannot give a short definition of it, my whole letter will have a natural tendency to illustrate.

"To humour this prejudice, however, (for there are occasions when it becomes necessary to yield a little to popular whims,) we have been sometimes told, that 'no more tickets would be issued than the house could conveniently hold.' Every person of fashion perceives at once the futility of such a regulation. It may be proposed in joke; but no man would for a moment be deceived by so clumsy an attempt at wit. In truth, I might as well invite the parson of the parish and his family to eat a bit of mutton with me at two o'clock, and call my entertainment a rout. To pretend to invite no more than the house can hold,

would be a dereliction of the first principle of *eclat*, which is, and ever must be, to try the strength of the walls, the width of the streets, the expertness of coachmen whose horses cannot move, and the intrepidity of ladies who cannot keep from fainting. Dangers must be provided with liberality and taste upon such occasions, or what will there be to talk about? Where would be all those narratives of hair-breadth escapes, and imminent dangers from axle-trees and poles, and quick turnings and backings, which are the constituent ingredients of *eclat*, and furnish conversation for that immense length of time which intervenes between one rout and another, and which at this season of the year has been known to extend to eighteen or twenty hours?

"No, Sir; whoever calmly and philosophically considers this matter, will acknowledge, with the conviction of often-repeated experience, that risks must be run; that poles of coaches behind must be forced through poles of coaches before; that legs and arms require to be crushed, else why are they in places where crushing may be reasonably expected? that screams must alarm the neighbours, who are afraid to stir, and guards be called out to clear the way to which they cannot approach;

that cloaths must be torn, laces reduced to tatters, and the whole labour of the toilet destroyed, before a rout can excite envy or admiration. And whoever is conversant in such campaigns of peril, will ever contemplate with a fond delight those fainting fits in mobs where no assistance can be procured, and those gaspings for breath where the air has no access. Such are the chief characteristics of the *eclat* of a rout, to which 'all the world' has been invited, and to which all the world repairs with an eagerness that bespeaks the value and importance of the entertainment, and shows how necessary it is to human felicity, how indispensable to rank and character, and how degrading to be *left out*.

"But all, hitherto, is without doors. It is something abstractedly considered. It would be something if it were to end there, and if the whole night's pleasure were only an effort to gain admittance. But it is little when compared with the distresses and inconveniencies hospitably provided within doors. Formerly, during the dark reign of popular prejudice, some means were adopted to establish a proportion between the recipient and the thing received: some notions of capability prevailed, and it was even asserted by Architects of

considerable note, that 'a house could hold no more than it could hold.' Some pains, therefore, were taken to ascertain what numbers rooms could contain, and what weight staircases and landing-places could bear; and the estimate, I understand, was generally taken from the dimensions allowed to the negroes on-board the African ships in their passage to the West Indies. But the Parliament having extended these dimensions by some late Acts, either considering that negroes had not the constitutions of people of fashion, or that they were a property of some value to the owners, this ratio could not be continued; and the estimate is now made according to the graduations of the thermometer. The mean degree of routs is 80° of Farenheit, any thing below that being 'a small party;' but *eclat* is not to be found under 90°, a degree of heat little known to the atmosphere of this country any where else. When the mercury mounts to this point, or higher, *eclat* is at its *acmè*, and besides the graces of a general gasp, 'twenty ladies may be seen fainting at the same moment in the same room*.'

"The pleasure of all this, I am aware, will not be readily conceived by you, Sir, nor by

* Vide the Newspapers of June 2, *passim*.

those who preserve their antient attachments to what they think comfort and convenience, and especially to that exploded space called elbow-room. But (not to speak of those who may be acquainted with asthmatic disorders), it will be perfectly understood by the parties whose cause I plead, who love to be breathless, and can form no other idea of death than as a violent squeeze; who are deep in the study of perspiration, have examined the philosophy of compression, and are above paying any attention to the national weather.

"Indeed, this superiority to the variations of our climate is no small triumph over common prejudices. Our winters and even our springs in this country are generally very cold; no Project, therefore, can be entitled to more respect than one which produces a degree of heat fit for persons of fashion to breathe in, and to breathe with that difficulty which enhances every pleasure. I have, by-the-bye, sometimes wondered why so many learned chemists will pretend to write on the subject of animal heat, without having been once at a rout in their lives. I do not affect to be acquainted with a subject so much out of my way; but I may assume, that their notions must be very crude and imperfect, who write on the power of heat without having

ever seen 'twenty ladies fainting at a time in the same room,' and 'others *laid out* in the balcony to recover among the bow-pots*.' Admitted, however, to such places, they might probably discover new sources of science in chemistry, and in particular observe its connexion with gallantry, for unquestionably ladies would never consent to be inclosed in those great boilers if it were not to add to their tenderness, and produce those melting moments which dissolve the most stubborn hearts.

"Yet these are not all the pleasures of our modern assemblies: after a variety of experiments on the power of heat, and a repetition of fits, with suitable declarations of 'intolerable!' — 'I shall faint' — 'I shall die' — "I can't breathe,'—which are words of course, to signify the delights of condensed society, and the charms of suffocation, another series of perils present themselves, more terrible perhaps than what have been surmounted. Those who have got in, will wish some time or other to get out; and this attempt, if the rout really is what a rout ought to be, must for the first two or three hours be impracticable, and for the rest dangerous. On this occasion, however,

* Ubi supra.

it is necessary that the few labours of the toilet, which survived the entry, should perish at the exit, that carriages should be broke, horses killed, and servants sustain fractures*. But in this great conflict, language must confess its poverty of description: some idea, perhaps, may be formed of it, when I add that, according to the opinion of seven or eight hundred ladies and gentlemen of the first fashion, all that our troops suffered in the late campaign were mere trifles, when compared to the danger and difficulty of getting home from a party of pleasure. It is in vain to compare the landing in Egypt, amidst the continued fire of the enemy, to the passage to one's coach, amidst the compressed ranks, who are as eagerly crowding to their's. I shall leave this, therefore, to some poet, who, having exhausted the metaphors and images of his predecessors, is able to invent some that are new.

"You will perceive now, Sir, that by the constitution of a rout, the complaints to which I adverted in the beginning of my letter dwindle into the prejudices of ignorance; that ease, comfort, and convenience, are vulgarisms which would check the brilliancy of *eclat* and the

* Ubi supra.

fame of rumour; and that the loss of carriages, horses, and limbs, are the minute ornaments which grace the triumph. If, therefore, the prejudices of the public are to be at all tolerated, it ought to be in a very partial degree. We cannot submit to deprive a rout of its long and edifying columns in a newspaper, and its numerous accidents and casualties. We cannot rob it of the only circumstances which serve as a barrier against the encroachments of city safety and *bourgeoise* comfort. All, I think, we ought to do in compliance with popular notions, is to add a medical staff to our establishments, and provide a room to be called the Dispensary, or Cockpit, to which the wounded may be removed during an engagement, that their cries may not damp the courage of the other assailants: and perhaps it might not be improper to consult BOULTON or WATT on the power of steam, and request them to fortify the roofs of our houses against those accidents to which still-heads are liable.

"I am, Sir,

your humble servant,

A MAN OF PLEASURE.

"*Pall Mall.*"

THE PROJECTOR. N° 7.

"All bodies have their MEASURE and their space:
But who can draw the soul's dimensive lines?"

DAVIES.

July 1802.

OF all the PROJECTORS who daily edify the public with their endeavours to improve the state of nature and of man, there are, perhaps, none who attract more attention, or excite more surprize, than that numerous body of geniuses, known in former days by the name of barbers and wig-makers, but in our politer and more respectful times by that of *friseurs* and *peruquiers*. Why the French language should be supposed to ennoble every thing it covers may probably be the object of a future speculation. It is, however, impossible for the proudest of Projectors to look with disrespect upon the class of men I have just mentioned, since to them are committed the heads of almost the whole nation, and since under their hands most of those heads receive the

only improvement that is either deemed necessary, or of which they are thought capable.

Yet, while I pay this compliment to these gentlemen, as becomes one Projector to pay to another, I am not their blind panegyrist. I am bound in justice to say, that with all their abilities they are but men, and have the common failings of men, and especially that very crying weakness of Projectors, namely vanity. I could give specimens, were it necessary, to prove that on some occasions this betrays them into a mode of speaking and writing on the subject of their inventions, which is considerably remote from modesty. This *may*, however, be only that consciousness of excellence which has been tolerated in great geniuses, and without which, it is said, a great genius will rarely be tempted to make those daring efforts which "elevate and surprize," or, indeed, to exhibit any extraordinary display of talent. I am willing, therefore, to make allowances for their frequent use of superlatives in the description of a wig, and for culling the choicest flowers of encomiastic rhetoric to display the beauty of a *curl*, or the convenience of a *braid*.

But I have been more particularly induced, in this day's speculation, to touch on the merit

of our head artists, from a circumstance that struck my eye lately in the newspapers, the columns of which are the "Philosophical Transactions" of wig-making and hair-dressing. In an advertisement, addressed to "gentlemen of rank and fashion," who are undoubtedly the ablest and most generous patrons of what belongs to the ornamental part of the head, after an enumeration of the peculiar excellencies that attach to wigs made by the ingenious author, which are too numerous for me to repeat, a discovery is announced that appears to be of the first importance to mankind in general, and that, indeed, I should rather have expected from a philosopher than from a *friseur*. It is briefly expressed in the following words:

"He," meaning the artist, "has a copper-plate engraved, which enables any lady or gentleman TO TAKE AN ACCURATE MEASURE OF THEIR OWN HEAD."

The value of this discovery will at once appear to those who are conversant in the history of mankind at large, but more particularly with the history of literature and literary undertakings, of all which it may be said, that their success or failure has depended entirely on the *measure of the head* having been

ascertained, or miscalculated. Whatever errors have been committed by statesmen or authors, the two great instructors of mankind, and supreme conductors of human affairs, are universally acknowledged to have proceeded from this one want, the want of an accurate measure of the heads that project or execute. It is this lamentable defect, or oversight, for I wish to use the gentlest terms in speaking of the faults of my fellow-creatures, that has betrayed so many thousands into exertions beyond their powers, and endeavours to execute that for which Nature never designed them. It is this which occasions the melancholy reflection that many thousands consume almost the whole of their lives in experiments to find out what they are fit for; and when they have made the discovery, it is not until their powers and faculties are wasted by age, and incapable of lending them any assistance. To this it is owing that many a man dies with the name of a lawyer, who ought to have lived in the profession of a wit; and that many others have been buried with ecclesiastical honours, who might have grown rich in the occupation of a farmer. It is this which intercepts one man in his way to the bench, and another to the diocese; which prevents the physician from

attaining his chariot, and sends the politician to a jail when he was preparing for the privy council.

How different would the case have been, had they in early life obtained one of our artist's machines for measuring the head! It is truly deplorable to think of such a number of our fellow-beings who live till advanced age, before they know the size and capacity of their heads, what they can comprehend, and whether they have depth to contain the articles necessary to crown their favourite wishes and pursuits. For though this knowledge may, in some cases, be acquired by experience, yet experience, to answer the purpose effectually, must be very long, and, as some gentlemen have found, very expensive. Few articles have of late years risen so highly in price as this, and it is not very easy to account for it. That there is an immense quantity of experience in the market cannot be reasonably doubted: but the mischief seems to be, that every one prefers an article of his own manufacture, however dear, to one made by another, which he may purchase a thousand *per cent.* under the prime cost.

The discovery, however, of a machine to measure the head, being now effected, it is hoped

it will meet with the encouragement it deserves; and, while I disclaim any connexion with the ingenious inventor, I am most disinterestedly anxious to recommend to all ranks of people a contrivance which all ranks seem to want.

At the present crisis, for example, when hundreds of well-meaning gentlemen are travelling over all parts of the United Kingdom, canvassing for a seat in the great assembly of the nation, and fancying, merely on conjecture, that they are qualified for it, would it not be a considerable saving to some of them, I mean in the article of disappointment, if they were first to measure their heads, upon accurate principles, and ascertain whether they come up to the exact dimensions of the *caput* of a wise and loyal legislator? Surely this would prevent some trouble and mortification to themselves, and a great deal of both to their friends; and, it may be fairly supposed, might contribute also to the welfare of the nation, by providing it with a set of senators whom nature had qualified to an inch for the important office, and whose heads were of somewhat more use than merely to nod, or bear a wig. Why is it that we hear of some who have gone beyond their depth, but because they did not

know their depth? and why do we hear the terms "shallow and superficial" so often applied, and justly applied, when the imputation might have been averted by this little machine for taking the heights and distances of heads, "engraved on a copper-plate," and given away *gratis* in Bond-street?

The mention of senators, which the circumstances of the present month naturally suggested, connects with it the case of the members of other deliberative assemblies, where certain persons are apt to step forward in situations for which they are miserably ill provided, both as to length and depth of headwork, and of which, however, they rarely become sensible, without trying that very aukward experiment, which we call *exposing themselves.* This is, in fact, exposing their heads, which are upon such occasions measured by their neighbours, and the superficial contents in general found to be far short of the proper standard; and this will always be the case if we bring our heads into business by computation, instead of actual measurement. In such societies, however, were they under proper regulations, which I hope they soon will be, a set of officers might be appointed, and called MEASURERS, or, as fine words are

most acceptable; DIMENSIONISTS, whose business it should be to apply the rules of geometry, according to the machine above specified, to the head of every man about to make a motion, or speech, or to reply to the motion or speech of any other person. A suitable standard might be appointed by a committee of geometricians, by which every head should be appreciated; for, although we cannot make all heads equal, yet in a debate it is very necessary to make a selection of such as bear some reasonable proportion to each other, or at least to exclude those which are greatly deficient in length and depth. The prolixity of debates would be considerably obviated by this method, and, in a world of business like ours, I cannot but think such a saving an object of serious moment; and I consequently cannot but flatter myself that the hints I am throwing out will not be neglected, and that the ingenious contriver of the KEPHALOMETER, or head-measurer, will find a great demand for the article on the eve of all elections, councils, and vestries, and more especially on the great festivals of St. Michael and St. Thomas.

If we look to the present state of the learned professions, we shall see at a single glance the necessity of this machine for measuring heads.

It will not, I grant, do much good to the present generation, whose heads, although we were to measure them with the greatest accuracy, have long ago taken a wrong direction, and cannot now be turned into any more useful purposes. But it may, among the rising generation, prevent that confusion which is so frequently observed to proceed from young men rushing into one profession, when their heads were manifestly constructed for another. It is owing to this neglect of the dimensions of the head, that, to use the language of a learned writer, many men expose themselves in a pulpit, who would have done honour to their country by following the plough; and it is no doubt owing to the same cause, that, when we look into the inns of court for chancellors and judges, for Hardwickes and Mansfields, we meet with the writers of farces and prologues, and players on flutes and violins; and that when, in other departments, we look for men of family and fortune, we so frequently encounter stable-boys and jockies. Anomalies like these never could have taken place had the KEPHALOMETER been early applied, and the party had calmly sat down to be measured for a suitable employment in life.

It is true, indeed, that some have contrived,

by a fortunate concourse of circumstances, to turn their heads to a proper object, while apparently they have retained their first and ill-judged choice. I am acquainted with a barrister, who, although his name be little known in Westminster-hall, is very well known every where else as a man more capable of training a horse or a spaniel than any sportsman in the kingdom; and I have more than one gentleman by trade in my eye, who can kick up a riot, seduce a wife, fight a duel, or defraud a creditor, more genteelly and expeditiously than any professed rioter, seducer, bully, or sharper, in Newgate. But such fortunate coincidences are not often to be expected; and the instances are too few to be depended on, of those who contrive to have and to hold both what they are, and what they are not fit for.

There is one tribe, of late become very numerous, who particularly stand in need of the machine to measure heads. I mean, and with all due respect, the POETS in general. No race of men have suffered so much from gross numbers or loose computation, or, what I may call "taking their heads for granted," and imagining that the manufacture of verses is the whole duty of man. They have by this fatal mistake mounted from a Vauxhall song to an

epic poem; and thus deprived the world of several eminent handicraftsmen, of some very industrious shopkeepers, and of sundry persons admirably qualified to carry on the lesser operations of the loom, the last, the hod, and the knot.

As to Politicians, it has been a standing complaint in this country for above a century, that this trade has been so egregiously misunderstood as to be supposed to require no head at all; consequently, wherever such a mistake prevailed, it was thought absurd to measure a head which did not exist, or was not deemed necessary. But time and experience have in some degree removed this prejudice; and the charms of ignorance will probably soon lose much of their fascination. I trust that all politicians behind counters, and in public or private houses, whether habited in woollen or in muslin, will hereafter take the gauge and depth of their heads by the KEPHALOMETER. They will then probably discover, that cases and circumstances, which have puzzled the ablest and wisest in all ages, cannot be adjusted by those who are distinguished for the want of wisdom and ability; that a subject will not be better discussed for not being at all understood; and that they who have no means

of information are not quite so well qualified to judge as those who have; that the affairs of a shop or a family may be more easily managed than those of a parliament or a cabinet; and that the wisdom which is the result of long experience, of combined knowledge, and of deep research, seldom comes by instinct. They will discover, likewise, that a man always talks most to the purpose on a subject with which he has some acquaintance; and that the common sources of information are not always to be relied on, since even the lie of the day is seldom the lie of the morrow.

But, in truth, to what description of persons will not this machine be useful? Let us look at the protracted and almost endless writings of the controversialists. Had a machine for measuring heads been discovered about a century ago, would the BANGORIAN CONTROVERSY have lasted so long? And, I hope I may ask without offence, would not a vast saving of paper, print, temper, malice, envy, and all uncharitableness, and other useful articles, have been made, had some of the writers in more modern disputes applied my ingenious artist's machine to their heads?

Perhaps, too, the fascinations of the ladies are not wholly uninterested in this discovery,

although the original artist had no object but their wigs. ' Might they not apply the machine to their lovers' heads at the same time that they carry on the attack on their hearts? Many circumstances of public notoriety seem to prove, that deficiencies in the head are of very important consequence to the happiness of the matrimonial state; and that, although some husbands have proved themselves to be rogues, yet that roguery has been so mixed with a corresponding quality, that the best JUDGES have declared it extremely doubtful whether they were most rogue or fool. And I believe it has been generally found that, in treating a helpless woman with barbarity, in abusing the tenderness of the sex, and tyrannizing over wife and family, from whatever occasional causes such wickedness might proceed, there is generally a great defect of intellect, a depravity and vulgarity of mind, which could not have escaped the unhappy sufferer had she at first *measured the head.*

I cannot close this speculation without hinting in few words, because such characters will not bear many, that even men of pleasure would find their advantage in measuring their heads before they join in those convivialities which constitute the only employment they

seem to have on this earth. A number of very disagreeable circumstances might be prevented if they knew exactly, by liquid measure, what their heads could contain; and many duels would, no doubt, be avoided, without lessening the importance of horses, strumpets, or other articles, for which they think it necessary to risk life, and which, if there were not an hereafter, would really be an equivalent to the life that is risked.

THE PROJECTOR. N° 8.

" Admiranda tibi levium SPECTACULA rerum." VIRG.

August 1802.

THE powers of man are limited. Vast as the Projects may be of which his genius is capable, there are some things wholly removed from his dominion, some hardships to which he must submit without hope of remedy, and some kinds of subjection which are common to him with inanimate nature. Even our Modern Philosophers, as they have been facetiously

called, who have proposed methods of improving the human species, by leading it on to *perfectibility* (by which they probably mean perfection), and exempting it from the inactivity of sleep, and the interruption of death; even these wise men have been compelled to acknowledge that there are some externals which their discoveries cannot reach, and to which they must submit with the same dignified composure they display in parting with the consolations of Religion, and the charms of Virtue.

Among these circumstances which baffle the ingenuity of Projectors and Philosophers, the WEATHER may be considered as of the highest importance, not upon account of the hay or the corn expected to be annually produced, for these are considerations beneath the attention of the parties principally concerned in this paper, but upon account of the dependence which it has, for some years past, been the fashion to place on it for a great proportion of the happiness of human life, and which has increased the demand for sunshine in a prodigious degree.

After all the inquiries that have been made by my predecessors into the means of promoting happiness, it seems at length to be agreed,

that we might have arrived much sooner at a conclusion on the subject, had we looked for happiness in the right place, and not confined our researches, and consequently our instructions, to matters of a domestic concern, without ever suspecting that true happiness is an enjoyment to be found only *without doors*. Lamentable was the ignorance of that man, who, by way of punishment, divided the house with his wife, giving her the outside, while he kept the inside for himself. But a new and more correct way of thinking now prevails; and the important discovery having been made, that happiness was only to be found in the open air, thousands began to flock to the fields, and gardens, and highways around the metropolis, to enjoy life, when, such is the state of all human things, they at the same time discovered that happiness is doomed to imperfection, and that, without a command of the weather, they were still exposed to mortifications and disappointments.

This unpleasant truth, at all times perhaps a matter of belief with some of the old school, has been more especially obvious to the meanest capacity during those months of this year which the Almanacks, and the Almanacks only, have agreed to call *Summer*. Thousands

have been deprived by incessant rains of the only means of gratification for which nature and education seem to have fitted them, and have often been furiously contending between *abroad* and *home*, as we have heard of armies pent up between the enemy behind and the sea before, where force was useless, and flight impossible. Surely not less perilous is their situation, when a torrent of rain begins to pour down, who consider a mob as society, and home as an inhospitable desert.

When we contemplate the powerful influence of curiosity, and the effect it has to depopulate our houses and streets, and cover our fields and roads with human beings, waiting patiently for many hours to look up to an object, which probably in a few minutes will elude their sight, we must surely lament that this vast crowd should be produced in a climate so unfit for their existence, or that human felicity, under such circumstances, should not have been made water-proof by the dexterity of some ingenious Projector. One amusement after another, in trembling succession, has been announced this summer for public view; and "all the world" has flocked to see it; but, just when "all the world" expected to be gratified, a deluge of rain has intercepted between them and the

object, and they have been precipitated back to a premature home, with no other resource for the rest of the day than to change their apparel, and to tell of their distress.

Amidst this general calamity, this perpetual recurrence of disappointment, this wringing of hands and of cloaths, the author of the PROJECTOR is not afraid of being thought selfish when he announces, that he enjoys some advantages which are not always to be met with, and that it is his custom to turn the misfortunes of others to the benefit of his own speculations. The fluctuations of hope and disappointment which my neighbours and friends have experienced, have afforded me many choice opportunities of meditating on the passion of curiosity, by observing the various objects which excite it, and the different influence of each; and, by studying these trying cases, I have acquired that knowledge which would have been impossible in a more favourable season. It is well known that, in order to consummate our skill in any disorder to which the species is liable, we must resort to the places where it is most prevalent, as young physicians go to New York for the yellow fever, and to Constantinople for the plague. In like manner, for many weeks past, while a dripping and a

drenched publick was passing by, I have been from my windows making dry reflections on the power and effects of curiosity.

Curiosity is, I believe, generally allowed to be the strongest and most lasting of our passions; the strongest, probably, because it is not resisted by any considerations which prevail with mankind in other cases, such as the danger of wasting health, time, or money; and the most lasting, because, of the crowds who indulge it, the aged are by no means an insignificant proportion.

To these characteristicks I would add, that it is the most impartial and indiscriminating of all our passions; it makes no distinction of place, person, or object; and this I mention, not as altogether a new discovery, but to repress the pride of those who have the honour, as they call it, to raise curiosity; and who, having counted the number of spectators, are ready to flatter themselves that they have a majority "on this day's gaze." The candidate on the hustings may proudly estimate his popularity by the number of men, women, and children, who are gaping and listening to him, rending the air with huzzas, or drowning the voice of his opponent with hisses; but he ought to reflect, that it is more than probable that,

mutatis mutandis, he would be equally popular on the scaffold, or in his way to the gibbet. The difference, indeed, in point of curiosity, between an election and an execution, is so very small, that it requires the aid of extremely nice calculation to ascertain it. The proprietor of a balloon may also think that he has got the world on his side, when he sees a populous city emptied into the fields and highways; but he ought to remember that, of the vast crowds who are looking up to him, one half have probably just returned from pelting a man in the pillory, and the other half from seeing a thief whipped round Tower-hill.

These are circumstances of a very humiliating kind; but yet such is the constitution of curiosity, and so impartial are its impulses, the "seers of sights" have but one sense to gratify, and that sense so very comprehensive, and so little apt to make fastidious distinctions, that they will follow a wise man or a learned pig in equal numbers; and press with the same eagerness to behold an eminent character, whether he be in a triumphal chair, or at the tail of a cart, whether he be coming into place, or going out of the world. Processions are always in great demand with the curious; but have so little connexion with the thinking fa-

culty, that it is very seldom inquired what the nature of them is, or whether a preference ought not, in some cases, to be given to one over the other. We observe the same number collected to view the march of a regiment, and the procession of a parish feast, equally enlivened by marrow-bones and cleavers as by clarinets and horns; and the successful candidate, who rides triumphant on men's shoulders, and harangues an applauding populace, knows full well that he could raise the same number next day, by promising to stand upon his head, or dance on the tight rope.

Those, therefore, who provide objects for public curiosity have no great reason to be proud of their success, and may, perhaps, from these premises, derive consolation for the want of it. Curiosity seeks objects for no other reason than that it may say it has found them; and the grand ambition with most is to be able to assert that they have seen the sight, and to tell the difficulties which embarrassed them, the many hours they had to wait, the dangers they encountered from the crowd, of which they never discover that they make a part, and the escapes they effect from the eagerness and impertinence, the jostling and hustling, to which they unconsciously contribute. If to this a few

bruises or a broken limb can be added, they are regarded as honourable scars, and as something that may hereafter stop a gap in conversation; and so far are these circumstances from operating as precautions, that they commonly act as the most powerful incentives. Never does curiosity prompt with greater effect to crowd to any place in order to see a sight, than when the chance is that access may be impossible, and the object invisible.

And this leads me to remark, that curiosity is not only the most impartial, but perhaps the most courageous of our appetites. But it is not necessary to prove this, otherwise than by an appeal to those whom the unfavourable weather of June and July did not terrify from the risks which it added to the peculiar dangers of riot. The proportion of females in our mobs is an additional proof, if any were necessary, that curiosity is a passion of great fortitude, and the only one that appears to be of no sex. On this subject, however, it must be remarked, that although the ladies of high *ton* are more exposed to the weather than the gentlemen, they are not such extensive sufferers in the article of wet cloaths, as before the stripping fashion was imported from France.

Having made these few remarks on the nature of this disease, it would perhaps be the business of a Projector to suggest some cure for it; and a correspondent has, indeed, hinted at my duty on this occasion; and, while it is no disgrace to fail in that in which no man has succeeded, I may be indulged in some whims on the subject. As to giving advice, however, to curious persons, which my correspondent recommends, I really know not how that can be performed with effect. Even when I censure curiosity as being indiscriminate, I must own I am acquainted with no rules by which it can be rendered more discerning, or more nice in the choice of its objects. To grave men, indeed, sitting in their closets, there may appear a difference between a balloon and a boxing match, a pillory and a procession, an election and an execution, a bull-baiting and a common-hall, a meeting of politicians and a set of fireworks; but I know of no means by which the comparative merits of these objects can be made obvious to the devotees of curiosity. They cannot be brought to comprehend the minute distinctions which the parties concerned in these exhibitions have established in their own favour, from the vain hope that they may acquire a preference in the

eyes of the populace, which, however, as already stated, to the great mortification of their vanity, they never have acquired.

I consider any attempts, therefore, of this kind, as doomed to be unsuccessful; but, as somewhat seems to be expected by my correspondent, I shall relate a Project of which I adopted during the whole of the rainy season, and which I have found effectual in my own case, and that of a few friends whom I prevailed upon to follow my example.

My rule, then, is simply this: I determine to enjoy all out-door amusements, during a rainy season, by proxy, and to see all sights by the eyes of other people. This may appear a little paradoxical; but I can assure my readers that it is one of the most simple prescriptions that can be taken, and at the same time one of the most efficacious in preventing all the inconveniences of curiosity. The medium through which I view all public spectacles is that common machine called a Newspaper; and from repeated experiments, as well as the information of my friends, I can aver without hazard of contradiction that sights seen through this medium are far more "sublime, delightful, enchanting, enrapturing, captivating, and

unspeakable," &c. than by the naked eye. By indulging my curiosity, therefore, the morning after a spectacle of any kind has been presented, I not only obtain a more full view than my own eyes would have furnished, but I am confidently assured I see somewhat more than the reality, and at the same time enjoy the picturesque fancy, and copious inventive powers of the relater. Nor will this method of frequenting public amusements appear so very new as some may suppose, when it is recollected that we are in this only following the example of those great travellers who explore every part of the globe in books, and endure the fatigues and enjoy the pleasures of sea and land, mountain and valley, without stirring out of their libraries.

Such is my scheme; and if the simplicity of it does not offend, for perhaps something more mysterious was expected, I can now very confidently add that it is attended with some considerable advantages, which will shew it to be both œconomical and salutary. A very great saving is hereby made in the article of time, which I have always looked upon to be of great value, because no man knows how soon it may become scarce. It is not many weeks ago that, in the course of the short hour

allowed to breakfast, I beheld all the glories of a review at Wimbledon, an election at Brentford, and a trial at a country assize, which, to those who will neither delegate nor postpone their curiosity, must have cost at least a whole day. Another great advantage of my scheme is, that it enables me to see sights in safety; I am not liable to be squeezed in a crowd; no ditch is behind, into which the mob may precipitate me; I run no risk from the prancing of the horses; I am in no fear of scaffolds breaking down; I am not particularly anxious to secure a coach, or to claim the protection of a pent-house; and my refreshments are at hand, and may be taken without impediment.

If these advantages can be proved to result from my plan, it is certainly worthy of a trial; but, as popular prejudice may run high against it, I wish to remove that obstruction of all improvement, by recommending to my readers a few reflections on the use of seeing sights. I would have them inquire of those, who during their lives have been constant gazers, how far human happiness is actually concerned in the matter; whether most of the duties of life may not be performed, without allowing our eyes to get the better of the rest of our senses; and

whether all the purposes of social enjoyment might not be answered, were men to assemble together in lesser parties than what constitute a mob. And to such as are apt to feel with peculiar acuteness the disappointments of a holiday, I would suggest, that in the course of human life there are greater privations to be endured than absence from a balloon, or a sailing-match; that there are misfortunes to be surmounted which may last longer than wind or rain; and that those spectacles only can apologize for voluntary fatigue and danger, which have some tendency to enlarge our virtue, or improve our understanding.

THE PROJECTOR. N° 9.

"—— Emptorem inducat hiantem." HOR.

September 1802.

AMONG the many contrivances of this inventive age, there are few which seem more happily calculated to please the reigning taste than that change of names which has been lately

introduced. Whatever is tasteful, elegant, commodious, or fashionable, must be decorated by a name borrowed from the French, and incorporated by slow degrees into our own language; I say by slow degrees, for, if the incorporation were perfect and familiar, I should not have occasion to rank this scheme among the novelties of the present day, nor to regret that men who lived twenty or thirty years ago must go to school, or consult their French dictionaries, before they can name an article of the most common kind, particularly in household furniture.

I was led into these reflections some time ago, when, in compliance with the request of a few female friends, I accompanied them to the stately mansion of a right honourable lady who had just paid the debt of nature, and whose costly and magnificent furniture was exposed to view previous to a sale which, it was supposed, would be frequented by *all the world.* To be omitted from any invitation that promises to bring together *all the world,* is not very agreeable even to an obscure man, who does not belong to that world; and I did not think fit to let slip an opportunity of seeing what, it was confidently asserted, might never be seen again, namely the very perfection of

this world's GOODS. Besides which, the breaking-up of an antient house or family may be a profitable spectacle of mortality; and, if we are in a disposition to meditate as we ought on such instances of the uncertainties of human life, the pulpit of an auction-room may occasionally assist that of a church.

On entering the splendid apartments which, however carefully guarded from common and prophane eyes during the life-time of the noble owner, were now thrown open to every person that could spare the small price of a catalogue, I was soon bewildered in a maze of grandeur; amidst which, however, when the eye began to settle and to discriminate, I could distinguish a taste peculiarly elegant both in the selection and arrangement of the superb furniture of this stately edifice; and I might probably have indulged many an agreeable reflection on the ingenuity of the artificer who made, and the munificence of the owner who purchased the various articles, had I not been frequently interrupted by my companions, who every moment were requesting me to explain names in the catalogue given to pieces of furniture, which they had never heard before, and of which they consequently could not imagine the use. This was a little perplexing; for I

was aware that I might perhaps stumble upon some article with a new name, which it might not be quite so delicate to explain by its antient name and uses. I evaded these questions, therefore, in the best manner I could, until, by frequent references to my catalogue and recollection of my *French*, I had discovered that in general the new names were very harmless, and contrived only to give a variety to the eloquence of him who had the disposal of this "most superb, unique, unrivalled, and elegant collection."

That our language has of late years been highly improved by the introduction of words compounded from other languages, and rendered familiar by the use of the best writers, must be acknowledged; but this, it is now evident, is not the only improvement of modern times which has been employed to enrich our language and our mansions. Words entirely foreign have been gently pressed into our service, not by philologists and lexicographers, but by cabinet-makers and auctioneers, to give a dignity to tables and chairs, to exalt cupboards and brackets, and to preserve the purity of our diction as well as morals, by obviating that indelicacy which frequently attended the mention of certain necessary arti-

cles. Nothing ought surely to be undervalued which thus promotes decency, and tends to œconomy in the perishable article of blushing; and I should not have thought the introduction of foreign terms in some cases at all objectionable, but on the contrary highly praiseworthy, had they not been extended at last so far, that the furniture of a drawing-room now puzzles a man who studied domestic œconomy twenty years ago, as much as the new chemical nomenclature lately perplexed the old physicians.

A man, for example, somewhat advanced in years, and desirous of the comforts necessary to infirmity and sickness, may naturally hope to find at a sale an article so plainly and easily understood as an *elbow-chair*. He sees it before his eyes, yet he dares not trust his eyes; he examines the seat and the stuffing; he admires the case or covering; he sits down in it; it seems to have all the outward and intelligible properties of an elbow-chair. He wishes to mark its order in the catalogue, and that he finds to be No. 14, but, alas! No. 14 has no mention of an elbow-chair; he looks upwards and downwards lest this should be a typographical error: he turns over the leaf, but no elbow-chair. At length some friendly neighbour who has learned to

take an afternoon's nap in French, tells him, that what he wants ceased to be an elbow-chair some years ago, and is now a *fauteuil;* and he is perhaps farther enlightened by being told that, if he wishes to furnish his rooms with articles of that kind, he must make up his mind to the *cabrioles* or the *bergeres.* How must a man of this description feel his ignorance and degradation, when he reflects that he has reposed so many years on chairs of which he did not even know the names, and which he is now afraid to repeat without the aid of a prompter, lest he should make a mistake.

For what reason our furniture should be thus decorated with French names when many other articles continue to be manufactured and worn in English, it is not easy to determine; but two conjectures have been offered which merit our attention. Some are of opinion, that it is a scheme to enhance their value when brought to the hammer, that it is founded upon very nice principles in the doctrine of *acoustics,* and that it was first introduced by those who, becoming tired of constant appeals to the cye, wished to introduce the fascinations of the ear, and thus add another sense to the auction-room. The power of sounds we know to be wonderful,

and perhaps it is only a lesser branch of the charms of music, when we feel a delight in melodious names for our children, our carriages, our footmen, or our furniture. Hence our *Anna-Matildas*, our *Wilhelminas*; our *landaulets*, our *vis-a-vis;* our *valets, valet de place*, and *valet de chambre;* our *fauteuils*, our *cabrioles*, and our *bergeres*. At a sale, it is not difficult to conceive that one may think it much more honourable to bid for an *armoire*, than for a cup-board, the latter reminding us only of the country village, the lame grandmother, or the spectacled aunt. And can we not readily suppose that a lady of fashion may be induced to lavish a considerable sum on a set of Dresden *verrieres*, who would not have half the inducement to bid for as many glass-baskets? It is notoriously known by housekeepers, that the purchase of cups and saucers for the breakfast parlour is one of those actions of human life which may be performed by any menial who can neither trace her parents, nor speak French, if she only has received directions as to the quality and shape of the articles, and the shop where they are to be bought. But there are other talents requisite at a public *vente à l'encan*, frequented by persons of quality and taste, to accomplish the *achat* of a

déjeuné, and consequently greater *eclàt* is conferred by the spirited and emulous bidding, the tremulous suspence, and lingering fall of the decisive hammer.

The second reason that has been assigned for new-naming our furniture is probably not without its weight, although, in a matter of so much importance, we must guard against presumptuous conclusions. Besides the pleasure of *purchasing* articles decorated with French names, it has been supposed that there is also an additional portion of happiness in the *enjoyment* of them. The pleasures, for instance, of the table may probably be heightened by the reflection that we are drinking our favourite toasts in a set of *compotiers;* our healths and our sentiments may be elevated, and our wine may have a *raciness* which cannot be perceived by those who trust their king and country, their constitution and their navy, to common drinking-glasses. Candle-light too, which, being universally preferred for social enjoyments to the common sun, ought not to be deprived of any of its enchantments, may possibly receive a greater degree of brightness from the new nomenclature. The time was when our rooms derived their light from branches, or, as they were vulgarly called, branched

candlesticks: but in the process of refinement these were exchanged for *chandeliers;* and chandeliers, probably because they began to be contaminated in village ball-rooms, and methodist meetings, gave way to *girandoles,* which are the favourites of the present enlightened age, and are occasionally relieved by *candelabrums,* the only species of illumination we seem to owe to the classic ages, and to which, that we may not be fatigued in going back to our Latin grammars, we have given an English plural termination. How far the learning of a family may be enriched by furniture which requires some knowledge of the continental languages, has never yet been clearly explained; but there is some reason to think that the preference of an *ecritoire* to an inkstand may in certain writings have advantages that are more than nominal.

If then the new nomenclature can be defended both upon account of the *eclat* of purchase, and the pleasurable *ton* of possession, there appears no good reason why an improvement of such consequence should not be extended farther, nor why any man should again enter a house, when he may become master of a *maison,* or sleep on a bed, while a *lit* can be procured. Already, indeed, some would rather

climb by the window, than not pass through the *vestibule*, a place which perhaps, in the memory of some persons now living, was a porch; and I question if they would retire, although on the most pressing occasion, into a closet, if the house could furnish a *boudoir*. And when it is notorious that, during the winter at least, some political transaction, a war or a peace, a treaty or a tax, is on the *tapis*, why should a private gentleman any longer cover his floor with a carpet? To all this reasoning, it has been replied, that the names of some articles are still retained in their pristine English for the sake of public justice, and to humour the ignorance or caprice of judges and jurymen, who would perhaps hesitate in finding a man guilty of entering a house by a *boudoir*, or stealing an *encoignure*, although they would have no scruple to hang him had he broke in by the closet and made away with a corner cupboard.

It has also been suggested to me by an intelligent friend, that, notwithstanding any advantages real or supposed which are attached to the new nomenclature, I ought not to rank it among the wisest PROJECTS of the present day; and, as my friend appears to have considered this subject very attentively, I shall allow

him to deliver his opinion in his own language.

"In the first place," Mr. PROJECTOR, "this new-naming of chairs and tables, bottles and glasses, militates against common prejudices so far, that I very much question whether, if any of our ingenious workmen should invent a piece of furniture, he would choose that it should be reckoned 'a deed without a name,' until the French were pleased to give it such an appellation as might fill the mouth of a sworn broker. And in the second place, however agreeable it may be to persons of fashion to change the names of every thing about them, and one day put their china into a cupboard, and the next into an *armoire*, and thus to perplex their friends and servants *euphoniæ causâ*, it may be doubted whether the practice will readily find its way into the City. For my part, I despair of breakfasting in Cheapside off a *déjeuné;* and I very much question whether our friend the Alderman's old port will relish better in a *compotier* than in a common drinking-glass. I think it would not be consistent with the antient and honest prejudices of John Bull to fit up an *encoignure* in Fenchurch-street, or to remove the darkness of the narrow streets between that and the river by either *candelabrums* or *girandoles*. And between

ourselves, Mr. PROJECTOR, I am not very desirous that this change should take place. I am an old man, and have never known very much harm result from calling *a spade a spade.* If we change the names of the furniture of our houses, that it may appear more agreeable and fashionable, and receive a new sanction independent of the goodness of the manufacture, the next step will be, and for the very same reason, to give new names, and fine sounding epithets, to the articles which compose our heads and hearts. Already I think I see some symptoms of this. Why is that article which every body laughs at almost every day in the newspapers, called *crim. con.* but because certain persons are desirous of getting rid of the seventh commandment? What are those ladies, fairly translated into English, whom we honour with the titles of *demireps*, *filles de joye*, and *elegantes?* What is a *fracas* that must be finished by powder and ball, but the very same thing that used formerly to be finished by the gallows? But even this is not all—Look, Mr. PROJECTOR, once more at the catalogue on your table, and read the following article: '*Peché mortel,* with down squabs and cotton cases!' now what, in the name of wonder, do you take this to be? Why, they tell

me it is a kind of couch, or sopha, and for what purpose truly! *Peché mortel* is in plain English a *deadly sin:* and don't we pray every Sunday, 'from fornication and all *other* deadly sins, &c?' I dare say there was some fine anecdote in the annals of French gallantry which gave rise to this manufacture: a pretty origin for an article of furniture that may be innocently and ignorantly bought up by some sober and decent citizen—a fine Trojan horse for him to introduce in his family.—No, Mr. PROJECTOR, we do not pretend to be immaculate: symptoms of frailty have of late years been discovered in the court and the alley, as well as in the mall and the square. We have our failings and infirmities, and proof enough that wickedness depends not on wealth, and that temptation may assail from a whiskey as well as a *Dickey;* but let us guard against hypocrisy, and not imagine that a fine name will conceal the depravity of a bad action: and whatever we do, let us have no 'deadly sins, with down squabs, and cotton cases.'"

THE PROJECTOR. N° 10.

Sir Balaam now, he lives like other folks,
He takes his chirping pint, and cracks his jokes.
"Live like yourself," was soon my lady's word;
And, lo! two puddings smoak'd upon the board.
POPE, Ep. on Riches.

October 1802.

ALTHOUGH the insufficiency of riches to procure happiness be a maxim established by universal experience, and their tendency to corrupt the heart be no less certain, when they happen to operate upon a weak understanding; yet as there are some persons to whom these truths appear paradoxical, I have given the following letter an early place; not, however, without suspicion that the author is rather a painter than a sufferer; nor without hinting, that he cannot earn the praise of originality who describes the influence of money acquired without intellectual effort.

"TO THE AUTHOR OF THE PROJECTOR.

"SIR,

"THE subject of your last paper, and some incidental reflections in your former lucubrations, have suggested to me that you are the person to whom I may now reveal my case, and one of those writers to whose opinion if I had long ago adhered, I might have avoided my present perplexities. I have no uncommon complaints, indeed, to make, no new facts to prove the shortness or uncertainty of human life, and no new list to exhibit of the miseries attached to the inhabitants of this lower world. Mine are distresses which frequently occur; but, as I do not remember to have seen them represented in a manner correspondent with my feelings, I am induced to think that you may probably discover something original, if not in the incidents, which I confess are common even to vulgarity, at least in the construction of my narrative.

"My parents were of the *middle* rank of life in the place where they lived, although in the metropolis they would perhaps have been reckoned among the *low*. Their circumstances were just sufficient to afford their children, of whom I was the eldest, an education somewhat

more extensive than common; and their wish was to instill such principles in us, of religion and virtue, as might atone for the deficiencies of birth and fortune.

"Of my youth, nothing is worth mentioning; it was spent in learning and practising what was good and useful, and I entered the busy world with better principles as well as better prospects than youths of my rank generally can boast. The death of a relation to whom I was consigned in London, put me early in possession of a business which I then thought lucrative; and I was so well pleased with its produce, that I married a young woman without any fortune, merely because I loved her. This was the happiest time of my life, and it lasted some years. Business increased, for I equally hated idleness and extravagance: but unfortunately for me, it happened to increase with too great rapidity; and by some of those lucky hits which are neither uncommon nor dishonourable, I was surprised by the sudden accession of a profusion of wealth, beyond my utmost expectations, and I may honestly say, as far as I can remember, beyond my most sanguine wishes. And here began all my miseries. Every morning and every evening, at home and abroad, in the parlour and the

counting-house, some dæmon whispered in my ear, '*You are immensely rich: act accordingly.*'

"This dæmon was not my wife, as some may suppose, although she, I must own, was not backward in suggesting that many improvements were now necessary, of which we never before felt the smallest want. Our very persons seemed to increase beyond the dimensions of our rooms; while our furniture, which came every day in quantities from the cabinet-maker, almost in plain language said, "We are strangely out of place here." Our health, too, became so very opulent as to despise the narrowness of the streets, and threaten to leave our vulgar bodies, if we did not immediately purify them by removing into the country. This was no sooner suggested than executed: for when was it known that money could not convert a house into a villa, and exchange a paved yard for a sloping lawn?

"But the alterations in our constitutions were not confined to the general state of health. The stomach, to which gold frequently flies when the head will not bear it, began to be so affected, that it could not admit food at the usual hours. There was not only a distaste but an absolute loathing of early meals: and I believe my wife would as soon have been caught

in an intrigue, or, what is worse, would as soon have paid a dress visit in an undress wig, as be detected in the fact of sitting down to table at our old hour of two o'clock. Yet, as sudden riches bring on a train of consequences for which it is impossible to be prepared, we did not leap from *two* to *five* without some qualms, which were not very easy to bear: and, to say the truth, although we afterwards found it necessary to prorogue the dinner to *six* or *seven*, I have not even yet been able to conquer a certain coarse hankering for food which seizes me about 'Change time, and operates like a sting of conscience, which the lenitive decoctions of a BIRCH or a BUTLER can scarcely pluck out.

"I might add, what you have, no question, already anticipated, the equipage, and dress, and servants, and entertainments, and, in short, the whole grandeur of people of fortune; all which I was irresistibly persuaded to procure and exhibit by that voice which perpetually called out, '*You are immensely rich: act accordingly.*' But I wave a detail of these particulars, as things which may be gazed at any day; and shall not attempt to describe either the pannels of my coach, or the hammercloth and housings—the many hundreds whom my wife has entertained at a rout—nor the vast

varieties of her dress, her bandeaus, loops, and festoons, which she exhibited on high days. All these matters came to us, as they do to others, through the grace and favour of the most eminent coachmakers, cooks, milliners, and mantuamakers, and are well known to the gay world. That they were *necessary*, I can by no means say; nor plead any other excuse for aiming at such distinctions, and partaking of the glories of Long-acre, and Bond-street, than what I have already offered, that voice which for ever cried louder and louder, '*You are immensely rich: act accordingly.*'

"It was my misfortune, Sir, to follow this advice, without taking the trouble to understand it: and it is evident that, without understanding it, you cannot know whether it comes from a good or an evil spirit. It is one of those fatal *double entendres*, those things with two meanings, of which, I am afraid, we have always a disposition to take the worst.

"Such at least has been my case. I *am* immensely rich, and I have tried to *act accordingly*; but, from whatever cause, I have not succeeded in my own opinion, or to the satisfaction of the world. I am wretched in plenty, and I crave amidst profusion; yet what is there which I have omitted to do, that, in my poor

way of thinking, was requisite in order to humour the immensity of my riches?

"In the first place, I contrived that my wealth should be no secret to those who might be most hurt by feeling their inferiority; and this, let me tell you, required a good deal of ingenuity. I invited all my old acquaintances, not to make them partakers of my happiness, or renew the bonds of amity, but to dazzle and to confound them, by a display of my furniture and my equipage, my china and my plate; and I starved them into evening dinners, that they might be convinced of the inferiority of that man who is so mean as to eat when he is hungry, or has so much of the low mechanick in him as to satisfy nature at stated periods. And when I had thus gratified my pride, and, to the best of my knowledge, excited their envy, which I highly prized, I gradually withdrew from them; and I was enabled to do this the more genteelly as, while I strove to convince them of the difference between us, it never once entered into my head WHO made that difference. I contrived, moreover, such little insults and mortifications as I knew they would feel. I dropt the friendly smile at meeting, and returned their salute with a grave reserve; in short, in a few months I practised

so many acts of refined unkindness, as to disband my whole *corps* of early acquaintance, and determined to associate with such only as were my equals or superiors, for it did not become me to forget that I was '*immensely rich*,' and must '*act accordingly*.'

"It mortified me, however, not a little in this business, that I could not contrive any plausible pretences for discarding my old associates. Some of them were men of great personal worth, some men of talents, and some men who had shewn me much friendship. But of what use, thought I, is the friendship of an inferior? Still I could not altogether please myself in this affair, although as they dropped off one by one I became more used to it. I certainly disliked them, but I could not tell why; that is, I could not give them a reason, for I was conscious to myself that I had no ground for dislike but the difference in our fortunes. My pride, therefore, I much regretted, had nothing in it manly and dignified; it was poor, sheer, vulgar pride, that had no other foundation than in wealth, which was in my case neither the reward of industry nor of understanding; and wealth, I well knew, could not purchase one drop of blood, nor one atom of merit, to give me the superiority. However,

in one way or other, I got rid of them, and thought it a happy riddance; for what connexion could there be at table between men of hundreds and men of thousands?

"In the second place, as to my relations, I had somewhat more trouble, and was obliged to devise many expedients to keep them at a proper distance. With my new friends it was impossible they should associate, because no man has a right to affront his company. Yet I was not sorry to admit them for once, that I might confound them with my magnificence, and shew them that it does not signify "to whom related, or by whom begot." They were not my equals in any respect; and, as I was not to be influenced by any considerations of a family which I could not ennoble, I looked with equal contempt on the evidence of a parish register and the blank leaf of a family Bible. One method, therefore, I adopted to be relieved from the visits of *such people*, was by contriving that my country-house should be too far from town to admit their visits being often repeated, and at the same time took care to have it known that 'I kept no house in town.' This, and the accustomed coolness with which they were received when by any accident they got access to *the presence*, soon delivered me from

their persecution. I know not how it comes about, Mr. PROJECTOR, but there is a wonderful pride in poor relations; they will not submit to any kind of treatment as they ought to do, and had rather be indebted to their own industry for a morsel of dry bread, than owe a feast to a man who perhaps can lend money to Government, or move the three *per cents.* Such pride, however, you must allow, is quite insufferable; and I left them to enjoy the fruits of it.

"As to my sentiments and moral conduct, I perceived a gradual change coming on, which I hope was likewise *acting according* to the *immensity* of my *riches.* In my early days, I had been noted for my regular attendance at church; and there, I confess, I sometimes found my equals, and sometimes my superiors, which was not then so great a difficulty to discover. *Now,* if I went to church, I saw no persons to whom I could speak with propriety: it was letting myself down; and I began soon to perceive that a place deserted by persons of fortune, like myself, could be no place for me. I withdrew, therefore, as gradually as I could, for I did not wish to be perceived while stealing off. I first dropt the afternoon service, and then the morning; because I discovered

that the former interfered with the hours of riding, as much as the latter did with the hours of sleeping. Ten years before this, I should have been astonished if any one had told me this; but I know not how it was, the duties of the pillow and the saddle became now paramount to all others; and there were not wanting books, as well as men, to tell me that religion is to be classed among the prejudices of education. The church, therefore, I got rid of in less than half a year; and this was followed by many consequences which convinced me that I had not misinterpreted the pleasing voice, '*You are immensely rich: act accordingly.*'

"Among these consequences, I confess that I began to look with indifference on my wife, not because she was less beautiful, less affectionate, or in fact less a favourite with me; but I could not help reflecting that she had not brought me a shilling, nor a single alliance of which I had not, in my present state, cause to be ashamed. I considered with deep regret, that if I had not been such a fool as to marry early merely because I liked the woman, I might have now stood candidate for the proudest she among my new connexions. Many women of family, I sorrowfully thought,

would have been glad of a husband who could afford to let them spend five or six thousand a year without calling them to any account, and without a rational enjoyment in return. But these reflections, however judicious and praiseworthy, came too late; and my only consolation was, that my wife began to be as heartily ashamed of her relations as I was, and, to do her justice, spared no expence in proving to the world that she was born to '*act according*' to the '*immensity of riches;*' and indeed she sometimes acted (purposely to please me, I suppose,) as if our riches were not only immense, but inexhaustible.

"Although, therefore, I had no reasonable pretext for parting with my wife, I discovered by the influence of example, that an intrigue could do me no harm; and accordingly I amused my leisure hours, and employed my loose cash, in improving the fortune of an amiable young lady belonging to one of the theatres, who, although accounted beautiful in the eyes of the world, and particularly in her own eyes, was, I verily thought in my considering moments, no more to be compared to my wife than the Witch of Endor. The connexion, however, was genteel in its nature, and gave me a certain *eclat* and reputation

among the fashionable world, of which, I imagined, my character stood very much in need.

"But without troubling you with any farther detail of my progress, which you may perfectly comprehend from the preceding circumstances, I must now come to the purpose of my letter, which is to request, that, as you are a PROJECTOR, you will have the goodness to contrive some scheme for the benefit of those who possess riches, but happen to have arrived at them so suddenly, and with so little meritorious effort, as to have none of that requisite preparation which teaches how to handle them. I have done all that money can do; yet my deficiencies are so great, and I know so little how to employ my stock, that I am convinced that I pass with the world for a proud, ignorant fellow, who has forgot every thing that is good, without learning any thing in its room that is becomingly bad. I never give an entertainment without making blunders enough to convince my guests that I have not been used to such ceremonies. The very furniture of my house is unknown to me by name; and at my own table I am afraid to help my friends to a dish, lest they should ask me what it is called. My rooms, therefore, are filled with

thing'umies, and my table covered with *what-d'ye-call-ums*. I can do nothing with a good grace; even when I give money away, it is received not as a gift but a right, and, what is worse, no man ever supposes I give enough. My servants, whom I chose for no other qualification than that they had lived in great families, know my origin by my ignorance of what to order, or how to behave; and they rob me with impunity, because I am afraid to betray my want of knowledge in the science of perquisites. When in company with *the great*, I can perceive a difference which makes me shrink: I know that I am richer than some men of family whom I have the honour to entertain; but I can distinguish a superior respect paid to them, which I cannot purchase. And as to pedigree, it is what I must never talk about, unless in my stable; and there indeed I have horses descended in a direct bridle from some of the first jockies in the kingdom.

"I had often been told of the wonderful influence of a dinner, and I have repeatedly tried it. I give such dinners as princes of the blood might sit down to, but the more I lavish in this way the less credit I get. My friends eat my costly viands, and drink my wine at a guinea a bottle; and what is the consequence?

They immediately go to tell in their *own* circles of the time they remember when I was a decent *joint-and-pudding* man, and how they wonder where all this comes from! Then follows a dissertation upon good luck, and the intoxication which riches excite in weak heads. As to my wife, although she does every thing in the power of woman to please her friends, when she has *a night*, she is continually mortified by their whispers, as well as confounded when some good-natured visitor points out a blunder in our decorations, or some informality in the articles of the desert. Yet what would these unreasonable people have? Her coloured lamps are as numerous as those of a duchess: she loses her money with a far more willing mind; and, while our deserts are as copious as Covent-garden market can furnish, I assure you upon my honour there is not an article that is not too much out of season to be good for any thing. Yet all this will not procure us that certain something which RANK possesses; and the only compliment paid us is, 'See what money can do!' Nay, we have sometimes overheard a proverb about the fate of *certain persons* when *on horseback*, how far they will *ride*, &c.

"If then, Mr. PROJECTOR, you can lay down rules for growing rich so gradually that the world shall not perceive that one has ever been poor; if you can instruct gentlemen in my situation how to lay out their property so as to have some little character in return; it will be one of the noblest *Projects* in your budget. If not, I shall begin to think my system is radically wrong; and that I ought to have begun by doing *good*, before I attempted to do *great* things.

"I am, Sir, yours,

"DIVES ET PAUPER."

THE PROJECTOR. N° 11.

————— Pleasure,
That reeling goddess with the zoneless waist,
And wand'ring eyes, still leaning on the arm
Of Novelty, her fickle frail support. COWPER.

November 1802.

IT was one of the oldest complaints in the memoirs of murmuring, that "there is nothing new under the sun:" and for some thou-

sands of years it has been repeated from generation to generation, every last grumbler thinking he has a better title to make use of it than his predecessor. It is a complaint, however, which, if I had the power, I would permit none to use but the ablest Antiquaries, for they only have a right to tell us what is really old and what is really new. With the generality of mankind, old and new are relative terms confined to their short span of existence: what passed in their youth is old; and what occurs in their age must be new without any farther inquiry.

But of all who complain of the want of novelty, there are perhaps none whose clamours are so loud as those who pass their lives in a continued demand for amusement, and who, I must own, have had of late great reason to complain that very little has been invented to relieve the burden of life, and employ that time which they suppose is given to them merely for the purpose of quick consumption. Whatever boast the present race of mankind may make of their improvements in useful arts and sciences, their invention seems to fail them the moment they attempt a new pastime; and almost all that the utmost stretch of genius has effected is to introduce a few varieties in the

amusements of our ancestors, or occasionally to revive any one that may have become obsolete. To what purpose, then, do we take pride in our improvements in science? can a party of pleasure spend an evening at a manufactory? or is it in the power of steam to raise a laugh?

I was much struck with the barrenness of modern times in this respect a few nights ago, when, in pursuit of a different kind of knowledge, I happened to light upon the origin of the greater part of those amusements which we employ against that dreadful enemy TIME; an enemy which (like another that might be mentioned) aims at universal empire, and, unless a coalition be formed of a different kind from any that has yet been projected, will continue its cruelties and tyranny undisturbed.

I shall therefore briefly run over a few articles, not by way of disheartening the lovers of amusement, for surely they should rather have comfort administered, but in order to check the pride of those ministers of pleasure, who affect to be labouring in their vocation for our good, and producing every day something which they call new. At the same time, as impartial justice is due to all, I shall not omit

to mention any real improvements they may have introduced.

And, first, I have to observe that, with respect to *hunting* and *hawking*, there is nothing new under the sun; for these amusements were known in the fourth century. *Horse-racing* is also of high antiquity, having been practised by our Saxon ancestors. In the time of Henry II. Smithfield was a kind of Newmarket for this sport. And here I have a very early opportunity of doing justice to modern invention, by stating that horse-racing, as a system of gaming, is among the glories of the seventeenth century; and that the improvements of more recent times may perhaps bring the honour of this invention still lower down. At what precise time two horses began to supply the place of two dice, or of a pack of cards, is uncertain. But that this is a real improvement, and not a variety only, will appear plainly, if we consider that horse-racing was originally practised by way of exercise, and then the owners were the riders. That intrepid, able, and honest race of young men, the jockies, is modern; and they have the honour of first introducing the various uses of a rusty nail, or a pail of water seasonably administered.

Ass-races are mentioned, and I believe for the first time, in the Spectator; consequently we may reckon them about a century old. Their having been lately revived, with great pomp and popularity, as an absolute novelty, is therefore an imposition on the publick, and an act of injustice, as tending to deprive our ancestors of their merits. The moderns, indeed, have done something, and let them not be robbed of the praise. They have transferred the glories of Tothill-fields to the sea-coast; and have induced sober and sedate citizens at Brighton and Margate to contemplate these sports with a true fellow-feeling, and to take a metaphorical interest in the success of the animal.

Foot-races were known in the middle ages; and can therefore only boast in our times of a revival, that they may occasionally supply the place of a pack of cards, and evince the transferability of loose cash. But they deserve encouragement in other respects, for a good retreat, to which they are admirably adapted, is allowed to be an honourable branch of generalship; and no man can therefore object to them who does not happen to have the rigid morality of a creditor, or the catching disposition of a bailiff.

Skaiting, say the Antiquaries, made its appearance about the thirteenth century. As to *sliding*, it is much older; and, although I cannot fix the precise date, I should suppose that sliding and ice came in together. The slips, however, and trips made in our days, are perhaps real improvements; they have great variety, and I question if it may not be said that every man invents his own downfall. Whether the ladies be equally ingenious, is a question that has lately been agitated in the Senate without being brought to a conclusion; and I shall, therefore, not presume at present to offer any remarks on the subject.

The *Tennis-court* is in our days a very fashionable amusement, but it was well known in the sixteenth century. Modern players, however, are to be commended for having sometimes rendered it a more expeditious method of lessening the value of money than the antient philosophers had any idea of; although, amidst our proficiency here, I am willing to allow that it frequently lessens the profits of the auctioneer and the conveyaneer, and that it may in time greatly injure the oratory of pulpits, and contract the circumlocution of parchments.

Of *cricket* I have only to observe, that it is about one hundred years old; but trap-ball goes as far back as the fourteenth century; and Dutch pins, skittles, and missisippi, are of considerable antiquity. The uses of these last-mentioned amusements may be seen in the "form of service for St. Monday."

As to *dancing*, *tumbling*, and all kinds of *juggling*, they have very high antiquity on their side. Dancing *bears* may be traced to the fourteenth century. This animal, greatly to the praise of our ingenious ancestors, was probably selected to display the graces of "the light fantastic toe," from its total incapacity. "The thing," as Dr. JOHNSON once said, "is not done well, but we are surprized to see it done at all." The most popular dancers, next to bears, are those which come from France; and here we have no other merit than in inventing such salaries, benefits, and presents for them, as have astonished all Europe, and have demonstrated, in a land of learning and learned men, the vast superiority of heels over head.

The tricks and wonderful performances of scientific dogs and horses, and their skill in spelling and grammar, are also very old. But the *learned pig*, who flourished *Anno Dom.*

1789, was, I believe, an innovation, or an invention purely English. This eminent scholar, however, having no heirs, as his preceptor did not probably wish he should marry into an illiterate family, the breed has become extinct; and we have lived to see "learning cast into the mire, and trodden down under the hoofs of a swinish multitude *."

Whoever is inclined to give a preference to the genius of the moderns over that of the antients, must regret with deep-felt sorrow, that *bull-baiting* belongs not to us, but to our fathers. It may be traced to the time of Henry II. when it was a sport with the young Londoners. But whether the recent discovery, that bull-baiting improves courage, fills our navy with Howes, St. Vincents, Duncans, and Nelsons, and our armies with such regiments as the brave 42d, be an invention, or a poetical fiction, I am unwilling to inquire. If it be, I can only say, it is one of those which have been hid from the wise and prudent in all ages.

Still less cause have we to arrogate to ourselves that very humane sport, *cock-fighting*. Alas! here, indeed, we may say, there is nothing new under the sun. Cock-fighting may

* Burke's Reflections, &c. first edition, p. 117.

be traced to Grecians and Romans; yet, lest the *breeder* or *amateur* should weep over the barrenness of modern times, let me hint for his consolation, that the addition of steel or silver spurs is a modern discovery, and well deserves the praise of all who wish to see blood flow, and flow freely, and to contemplate the agonies of death, when every pang changes the bet, and the last gasp may turn pounds into guineas. I am willing, likewise, to think that those horrid yells and rapid exclamations of *two to one*, *five to two*, &c. during every perceptible variety in the animal's sufferings, have the merit of novelty.

Throwing at cocks, connected with the above, is alluded to by Chaucer; but this diversion has of late been nearly abolished by certain magistrates, who seem to have no idea of promoting good by evil, and into whose heads it has never entered that cruelty may be sport. This, some will no doubt think, is to be regretted; for as it was mostly practised by the young, it formed a very useful elementary exercise, and they had thereby an opportunity of being "trained up in the way" from which they were not very likely to depart. Much information on this subject may be derived from

the four plates of that able historian WILLIAM HOGARTH, whose map of the road to murder is laid down with more accuracy than any thing of the kind I have seen.

Our claims to the invention of *dice* are extremely absurd. This game was played by the antient Germans, and by their descendants the Saxons, Danes, and Normans. Of *cards* I need say little, as we do not pretend to have done much more than to make them the chief instruments in uniting society and dividing property. But I must not omit to do justice to modern times with respect to the following articles, which I have not been able to trace much farther than the commencement of the last century; I mean, *hunting a pig*, *running in sacks*, and *smock races*. These, I am inclined to think, are native amusements; but it is not improbable they may migrate into France, as they were observed, not many weeks ago, to have reached the coast opposite to that country. With what dexterity that lively people may catch the pig, or run in the sack, is mere matter of conjecture; but, if we may give credit to the total want of dress in fashionable life, perhaps a shift may be an object of emulation, and those who now affront decency may be glad to run for it.

With regard to the old-established amusements of the drama, it is not pretended that we are inventors, although we have the merit of some very important improvements which may truly be accounted novelties; such as mixing comedy and farce in proportions so exact, that the nicest critick cannot distinguish the one from the other; and such as that species of handicraft wit which consists in throwing down tables and chairs, and breaking china, &c. and especially that happy union so long projected, and now completed, between nonsense and musick. Of these inventions, it would be mean jealousy to deprive us; but as I perceive that the newest things may in time become old, and that in spite of all our ingenuity the clamour for novelty is as loud as ever, I shall for the benefit of all concerned transcribe the following bill, the original of which is in the British Museum, and is about an hundred years old.

"At Crawley's booth, over against the Crown tavern in Smithfield, during the time of Bartholomew fair, will be presented a little *opera*, called the *Old Creation of the World*, yet newly revived, with the addition of *Noah's flood;* also several fountains playing water

during the time of the play. The last scene does present *Noah* and his family coming out of the ark, with all the beasts two by two, and all the fowls of the air seen in a prospect sitting upon trees; likewise over the ark is seen the sun rising in a most glorious manner; moreover, a multitude of angels will be seen in a double rank, which presents a double prospect, one for the sun, the other for a palace, where will be seen six angels *ringing of bells.* Likewise machines descend from above, double and treble, with *Dives* rising out of hell, and *Lazarus* seen in Abraham's bosom, besides several *figures* dancing *jiggs, sarabands,* and *country dances,* to the admiration of the spectators; with the merry conceits of Punch."

My readers, I trust, will at once perceive why I have taken the trouble to copy this bill, by way of hint to our managers. Many of their late attempts at variety, however well-meant, do not appear to me to suit the public taste better than the revival of this opera would, especially in summer, or at one of the watering-places. Nor is it necessary that they should borrow one incident from one author, and a second from another, when there is in Mr. Crawley's bill of fare articles enough to

furnish out a complete entertainment, not to speak of a rational repast.

Lastly, I may remark, that *pantomimes*, although some part may be borrowed from Italy, were in fact but an improvement on puppet-shews; and an improvement, let me add, which eminently proved the liberality of our managers, as, instead of wooden puppets, they generously and at a great expence undertook to employ living ones, who are well known to eat and drink, and bargain for salaries and benefits.

After this humble attempt to illustrate the complaint, that in our amusements at least there is nothing new under the sun, it may perhaps be expected that the author of the PROJECTOR is about to vindicate the honour of his country, by some scheme of prolific genius, and incontestable novelty; but this, if it be his ambition, which he does not positively avow, must be the subject of a future speculation, to which the present may be considered as an historical introduction.

THE PROJECTOR. No 12.

"*Difficile est hoc de omnibus confirmare, sed tamen est certum.*" CICERO.

December 1802.

THE fine compliment paid by Cicero to the uses of learning, in the oration from which I have taken my motto, "adolescentiam alunt, senectutem oblectant, &c." happened lately to be repeated with some degree of triumph in a company of men of letters, where I had the honour to be present: and it was followed by remarks, not very uncommon, that the refinement of the age is greatly indebted to the more general diffusion of literature; that it tends to make men wiser, and enables them to regulate the business of life with more discretion. In truth, panegyrics on the benefits of learning may always be expected in the company of those who have in any degree cultivated it. This is *l'esprit de corps.*

But while we were thus throwing indirect compliments at one another, as is the custom with Projectors, a gentleman who had not

hitherto spoke on the subject, but had during the conversation applied himself to his snuff-box with more than usual assiduity, broke silence, by exclaiming, that there was one purpose yet remaining to be mentioned, which letters could not answer: they could not make men *honest*. "I aver," continued he, "that, in the commonwealth of letters, there are all the crimes to be found, which are usual in any other commonwealth or kingdom; yes, all the rogueries upon record at the Old-Bailey." And then he burst forth into an enumeration of the thieves, rogues, pilferers, forgers, and murderers of literature; and gave such a catalogue of crimes as inclined us, so far from denying his assertion, to doubt whether, by some magical translation, we had not got into the press-yard of Newgate.

On my return home, this subject dwelt for some time on my mind; and, upon a recollection of past experience, I soon began to agree with our friend, that the similarity between the crimes of Grub-street, and those of the Old-Bailey, is very striking. Literary thefts are notorious: goods are stolen from books in the face of open day; and, although the thief attempts to disguise them, in order to make them pass for his own, the trick is so clumsily

performed, that immediate detection follows. These thieves, too, may be subdivided according to their degrees of criminality, like the objects of our Sessions and Assizes. Some will steal a whole book, and endeavour to vend it for their own; these are a sort of capital felons, and may be said to break open warehouses, and carry off goods by wholesale. Others, less hardened, will content themselves with a chapter or a section, and are a species of book-lifters, who may perhaps merit banishment; but the most numerous class are the pilferers, who aim only at such small articles as they think will not be missed, pretty little toys and beauties, which they may appropriate to their own use, and place in such situations as the owner will not be very likely to search. The dealers in rhime compose the greatest part of this class; and although the Critical watchmen very frequently detect and expose them, their poverty is such that the injured party is content to let them go with a little castigation, thinking it hard to confine a poor creature for pilfering a rhime, when perhaps he had but one line in the world, and did not know where another was to be found. One Alexander Pope is said to have been a noted offender in this way, and was repeatedly tried, but as

repeatedly got off by the goodness of his character in other respects.

Thefts, however, have become so common lately, that lenity, which has lost its effect, must be exchanged for severity. Public justice demands that honest men be protected in their writings, and that no person shall be allowed to invade an author's printed *castellum* without a warrant from the higher powers. We Essayists are particularly liable to suffer by depredations of this kind; and I have myself had some reason to complain of the light-fingered tribe, who will sometimes steal a whole Projector, and serve it as their brethren of the *scamp* serve watches or plate, by melting it down into paragraphs, in such a manner, that it is impossible to swear to the property.

Of the wholesale thieves, the principal part are called, in the language of the trade, *compilers*, which means the same as *divers* in the slang cant; for I am sorry to observe that, however honourably this term be sometimes applied, it is derived from *compilare*, which every Latin scholar will readily allow means *to steal*, and, when the articles are stolen, to heap them together, to pile them up, as thieves who break into houses, and pile up the

plate and other moveables in bundles. And as the house-breaker has his *crow* to force a door, or his pick-locks to open closets and repositories; so the compiler may always be apprehended with a pair of scissars in his pocket, which no paper can resist.

There is one branch of theft, which I wish I could say might be excepted in these remarks on the crimes of the commonwealth of letters: but truth obliges me to add, that of late years innumerable depredations have been committed on the property of some worthy clergymen, by stealing their Sermons, which, I humbly think, may be deemed a species of *sacrilege*. There was a time when this was much practised on the property of Tillotson, Barrow, Clarke, &c.; but of late, as far as my information goes, Dr. Blair has been the greatest sufferer. I was once present at the trial of an offender, who had broke into the Doctor's first two volumes, and taken out a good many articles; and, as he showed some signs of penitence, I asked him how he came to have the impudence to offer these as his own, when any attentive person might discover that they were the Doctor's property, and had besides the *Hall* mark? He answered that attentive persons might indeed discover

all this; but that the persons to whom he offered them, were principally a Corporation in the North, half of whom were inattentive, and the other half asleep.

With respect to murder, I am sorry to say, it is sometimes practised to conceal robbery. I have now before me the body of a discourse, with the head cut off, and the limbs cruelly mangled by the base perpetrator of the theft, to avoid detection; and so artfully was this managed, that although the mutilated body was found in his house after his death, the features are so completely obliterated that no discovery can be made of the person to whom it belonged. The cruel practices of some of this gang would, perhaps, shock my readers too much; but by way of information, I cannot help mentioning that, when they catch a volume coming out of a shop, they cut off the title at one blow, knock out two or three passages, and stab the context so often, that an excellent discourse has sometimes been left all over *gore* nonsense.

The principal murders, however, are committed on the bodies of those eminent characters whose residence is in and about Drury-lane, Covent-garden, and the Haymarket; and they are attended with circumstances of

particular atrocity, being generally performed before crowds of spectators, few of whom ever interfere; and very often for hire, which in the eye of the law, I humbly presume, constitutes assassination. These gangs of desperados have been very common of late; and such is their infatuation, that they care not whom they murder, provided they derive a benefit from it. They usually come from the country, where they are first tutored to this business; but the establishment of a good patrole, both Morning and Evening, will, it is to be hoped, put a stop to such enormities, and induce the guilty to take to some more honest employment, than murdering Scotch Kings, Venetian Moors, and Danish Princes.

Besides murder, there is another species of dramatic delinquents, who carry on the nefarious trade of piracy, very much infest the coasts of France and Italy, and are in league with a gang of land-robbers, who have lately committed sundry depredations in Germany; bringing away entire plots, fables, and characters. They smuggle *spirits* also, which, though of a very inferior kind to those manufactured by Shakspeare and Company, are suited to the taste of the lower classes in this country, who have a particular relish for arti-

cles of foreign growth—I cannot but remark, however, on this whole tribe of dramatic pirates, that they exhibit a melancholy instance of the force of bad habits; for, although the articles they bring over are so trifling and contemptible, that it is almost impossible to set a value on them, such is their propensity to thieving, that nothing of the kind escapes, upon which they can lay their hands.

There are likewise a low set of pilferers belonging to our theatres, who, not having the courage to take either to the open seas, or to the highway, are perpetually filching jokes out of the warehouses of Joe Miller and Co. and other old-established repositories. It is wonderful with what dexterity they will steal a pun, or a quibble, and offer it as their own for a considerable time, without detection. They entered some years ago into a conspiracy against one Henry Fielding, who failed in the dramatic line; and as soon as he was dead got possession by some means of his effects, tore off the marks, and have since brought them to sale as their own property. This species of swindling is not uncommon, and yet the publick is so credulous as to be duped, although, from the well-known characters of the parties, it is notorious that they live entirely by pro-

curing credit on false pretences. They are sometimes, indeed, condemned in the full penalties of empty benches; but, when men are hardened, common punishments lose their effect.

Forgery is a crime which has been very prevalent in the commonwealth of letters. One Lauder was a very noted character in this way, about half a century ago, having frequently forged the name of *Milton*, and would have ruined that very worthy character, if an ingenious Clergyman, now a high Dignitary in the church *, had not stept forward, and, by proving Milton's writing, detected the roguery. This fellow had the art to deceive a Mr. JOHNSON, a very discerning man of those days, but who, when undeceived, made the forger sign a discovery of his tricks, before he was turned off.—Another noted character, was a man who forged poems upon one *Ossian*, an ancient gentleman of Scotland, and likewise produced a will and other documents. This long deceived the publick; but the Mr. Johnson above mentioned, who was become wiser in consequence of his former mistake, pursued this new delinquent until he was brought to trial.

* The late Dr. Douglas, bishop of Salisbury.

The trial lasted a very long time; and the Jury went several times out, before they could agree in their verdict. At length they brought in a general verdict of guilty; but an exception was taken by the counsel for the defendant, and a question referred to the opinion of the Judges; so that the matter was not settled before the defendant's death.

A more clear case of forgery, however, occurred very recently, when certain person or persons unknown attempted to forge the handwriting of *Mr. William Shakspeare*, of Stratford upon Avon, in the county of Warwick, and produced a vast mass of writings, consisting of plays, letters, poems, &c. pretended to be written by the same William Shakspeare. Numbers of very honest gentlemen, who knew nothing of the matter, were taken in by these forgeries; when at length Mr. Malone, a very active and diligent magistrate in the commonwealth of letters, entered upon an investigation of the whole matter, clearly proved the papers to be forgeries, and, although he could not discover the immediate parties who imitated the hand-writing, was the means of bringing two persons to trial for "uttering them, knowing them to be forged;" and, notwithstanding the ability of their counsel, who

offered many *apologies* for their conduct, they were condemned, with full costs of paper and print. Mr. Justice Malone also drew up a plan of police, which will be extremely useful in detecting similar offences hereafter, and for which he is entitled to the thanks of the publick at large.

But this system, however beneficial in the case of forgeries, cannot attach to the mass of other crimes noticed in this paper. It becomes me, therefore, as a Projector, to suggest that an entire new system of Police becomes absolutely necessary, to protect the property of literature, from the daily and nightly depredations of the numerous classes of delinquents, who infest the walks of learning. Crimes of this sort have been so common of late, that the *Monthly* offices have more business than they can possibly attend to; and although their *salaries* have been advanced twice within these ten years, they are obliged to dismiss some of the most notorious of the gang of pilferers and pirates after a very summary examination: the consequence of which is, that they return to their depredations more hardened than ever, by depending on the many chances of escape.

It was proposed, in the company mentioned in the beginning of my paper, that certain

booksellers should be appointed to preside in certain new offices of Police, about to be established; but I objected to this, although I have a profound respect for many of the fraternity. The best of human hearts may yield to the slow progress of corruption; and there would be a danger of these gentlemen becoming *trading* justices, which would defeat the beneficial purposes of a strict and vigilant police. We agreed, indeed, that Mr. SYLVANUS URBAN, from his long experience, and advanced state of life, being now in his 72d volume, would be a very proper person to preside at one of the new offices, with full power to apprehend suspicious persons, and detain them in his pages, until they could give a good account of themselves.

But a more extensive and useful part of the plan would be to provide for such unhappy creatures as had no means of subsisting, after a gaol-delivery, but by returning to their evil ways. And this, it is apprehended, might be accomplished by a few sensible and humane persons forming themselves into a Society, and providing employment for such as have forfeited their character in literary society. It is well known that many of these unhappy objects have been brought up to an honest calling, but

for want of work, have been driven to the evil courses enumerated in this paper. Some have lived genteelly and in good reputation, until in some evil hour, and probably by the influence of a bad example, they have mounted their Pegasus, and robbed on the highways leading to Parnassus—But this I throw out merely as a hint to the humane and well-disposed. Prevention is better than punishment; and when punishment is unavoidable, let us at least take such measures as may lead to future repentance and amendment. And, in the mean time, a very necessary previous step must be, to watch the receivers of stolen goods, who are a principal cause of all the evil. These have too long been permitted to carry on their trade with impunity, and to purchase whole cargoes of ill-gotten histories and voyages, which they measure out in *sixpenny-worths* to the poor, in such a manner that both the right owner and the poor are equally defrauded. Such petty larcenies also defeat the purposes of justice; for, when brought to trial, it cannot be proved that the rogues have stolen to the value of *ten-pence.*

THE PROJECTOR. N° 13.

"Paulo majora canamus.
Non omnes arbusta juvant, humilesque myricæ."
VIRG.

December 1802.

It cannot be supposed a very pleasing reflection to me, that, although I have now completed a whole year of laborious endeavours in the service of the publick, I have never yet been applied to in the character of Projector by any considerable number of individuals, far less by any of those associated bodies who profess that the public good is their main object, and cause of assembling. But I take some comfort when I recollect, that such has always been the fate of Projectors; and that I am an unworthy member of a class of men who seem doomed to offer their advice unasked, and to exhibit plans and schemes of general utility which are neither solicited nor adopted. I can also make some allowance for the taste of the publick in regard to the subjects which have hitherto employed my pen, and am very will-

ing to confess that I may not, perhaps, have hit upon the schemes and improvements that are most in demand in these times. I have no modifications of political taxes, or mechanical engines and filtering machines to propose; and I have said nothing pertaining to that extensive philosophy which has been so successfully employed to give an edge to razors, and a gloss to boots.

Inattentive, however, as I may be in such matters, I am unwilling to let the year depart without some specimen of my skill on familiar subjects; and as Mr. Urban informs me that, by some secret compact between him and Time, his year always consists of 13 months, I shall take this opportunity of imparting a scheme, in the projection of which, I flatter myself, I shall have a great proportion of the publick on my side; I mean no less than a grand plan for the improvement of those useful astronomical and chronological treatises, intituled ALMANACKS. I wish to speak with deference to my worthy friends the worshipful Company of Stationers, the only Company who give bread to conjurors, and encourage that inspection into future events which is all that remains of antient prophecy. But these productions have too long persisted in the obstinacy of an anti-

quated, and, I hope I may say it without offence, a jog-trot-plan, without any compliance with the changes that have taken place within a century in our manners and habits, and without once considering, or indeed appearing to be in the least degree sensible, that there exists a WORLD of FASHION, whose times and seasons are not to be regulated by the heavenly bodies, but by other bodies duly constituted for the purpose, and which move in eccentric orbs, and describe circles of which the great Master Lilly, or his successor Merlin, could have no idea.

I was led to consider this important subject a few nights ago, when I received the annual present of Rider's British Merlin from my stationer, a man who, I will do him the justice to say, knows the value of a present to a poor Projector, although he has lately dropt some hints about the advanced price of the article, and the propriety of abolishing vails. On looking over this new edition of my old friend, Mr. Cardanus Rider, I saw, as it were in a moment, the inutility of going on in the old way, and giving a great deal of information to the publick on matters in which they are now little concerned, while a profound silence

is preserved respecting the many important subjects which engage universal attention.

The principal error, I soon discovered, of those gentlemen, Mr. Rider, Mr. Moore, Mr. Wing, and others, "who compile for their country's benefit," has been their taking the word *country* in a sense too limited for modern times, and consequently understanding thereby that part of his Majesty's dominions only which is "off the stones," to the utter exclusion of that other and more important district which lies within the Bills of mortality, or, to speak with more precision, between Hyde-park Corner and Whitechapel Church. In a word, they have neglected to make the proper distinction between town and country, and have devoted their astronomical labours entirely to the latter, as if the town had any thing in common with the country.

Of this mistake, and its fatal consequences, it may be necessary to offer a few proofs before I proceed to lay open my plan of improvement. And here I shall first observe a very prominent source of error. While they continue to divide the year into four quarters, or, as some call them, seasons, they do not seem to have the least idea of the proper beginning or ending of

any of these seasons. For example, that antient gentleman, Mr. Cardanus Rider, states, with more gravity than we can preserve in reading it, that the winter-quarter begins December 22, at 36 minutes past 5 o'clock. I shall not quarrel with him about the minutes; but I should be glad to know if any person living in the WORLD, properly so called, ever heard of winter beginning before the Queen's birth-day; that is to say, before the town is full? And I leave it to my readers to determine, whether it be not extremely absurd to compute Winter by a certain quantity of snow or frost, the price of coals, the appearance of mince-pies, or the death of turkies?

This error, however, being once established, let us contemplate the series of blunders which are in its train. The Spring is said to begin on March 21, which is the very middle of the Winter season; and the Summer is said to begin at June 22, whereas every child knows that the Summer is a moveable season, and depends entirely on the prorogation of Parliament, and the visitation of the watering-places. Autumn, by the same mistake, is made to begin September 23; but this may be pardoned as harmless at least, since no such season is known in the metropolis, it being a place

which is at that time very unwholesome to every person that can afford to leave it.

These are some of the sources of error, which our Almanack-makers have increased, from a want of attention and conformity to the manners of modern times and seasons. It is notorious that these are as different from what our ancestors were used to, as the climate of England is from that of Lapland, and indeed much more so, since the length of *night* in Lapland seems calculated for a much more genteel and refined class of society than is to be found in that country. Why our astrologers should fill up their lucubrations with so much information about the *sun* is truly astonishing; at least it is a proof that they sacrifice the interests of the town to those of the country. What purpose can their information respecting sun-rising answer, except it be a hint to break up company? The progress of the sun, it is well known, is a matter of no consequence in London, the inhabitants of which (I mean those who live in the WORLD) have the least personal acquaintance of all people on earth with that luminary, and are in a great measure independent of either his light or heat. The age of the *moon*, indeed, may still be retained; it may be occasionally useful in visits round the metropolis;

and some players are said to fix their benefits when it is at the full, from a notion that *all* the world does not travel by torch-light. I would also retain some slight mention of this luminary, from the influence it is supposed to have in many of the arrangements of fashionable life—at least such is the opinion of Dr. Willis, and other gentlemen of the faculty with whom I have had the honour of conversing on this subject.

My new plan then is, briefly, to omit all those calculations which respect the sun, and insert in their room some of the particulars which are hereafter to be mentioned. I would likewise propose to omit all that sage advice respecting agriculture and physick, which Mr. Cardanus Rider has for so many years "compiled for his country's good," but which can be of no kind of use in the metropolis. For example, he thus gives counsel in January: "In this month uncover the roots of trees, and cover with dung the roots of new-planted trees, to prevent the frost from injuring them," &c. And with respect to physick, he says, "Let not blood, and use no physick, unless there be a necessity. Eat often, and avoid too much sleep." The latter part of this caution, every one must see, is superfluous; and as to using no physick,

unless there be a necessity, it seems to be a malignant stroke aimed at the worshipful Company of Apothecaries, who, it is well known, have more business about the end of this month than at any other time of the year.

In lieu of all such advice, I would propose the following, or something like it, which might be varied every year, and will be found to suit the WORLD much better than any anxiety about the roots of trees, or the setting of kernels.

JANUARY. In this month, finish your Christmas visits: take an account of card-money, and prepare to return to London: draw from your steward as much as he can scrape together, and give orders about the birth-day dresses.

FEBRUARY. Begin to leave cards at the houses of three or four hundred friends: inquire where they have been "this age past:" keep an account of the names of lap-dogs, and a list of colds and sprained ankles: subscribe to the gaming-houses and concerts, and get acquainted with the names and qualifications of the new opera performers. Avoid coming too early to the theatre, and dine as soon as the play is over.

MARCH. Begin your routs, and let the world know when you are at home: visit Co-

vent-garden market, and learn what fruits are most out of season: lay in a stock of cherries and green-peas: bespeak glasses and china from the shops upon return: employ the lamp-lighter to decorate the rooms, and invite about twice the number of friends they will contain. Sow paragraphs in the newspapers, and disturb the neighbourhood till day-time.

April. In this month give public breakfasts in the afternoon, and go to dinner about an hour after sun-set. Visit other peoples routs, wonder how they can do such things with an estate *so dipt*, and be very prolix in the account of your escapes from the poles of coaches. Reckon up the number of broken limbs and axle-trees, and walk home in the face of day through a violent shower. Count the colds caught; and read with astonishment in the newspapers the brilliancy of the rout, the hospitality of the mistress of the house, the plenty of all scarcities, and the amazing convenience of accommodation, and conviviality of the company.

May. This is a good month to marry: let the old folks make up matches, and the young ones accept them without farther delay. Plant *Crim. Cons.* and rail at the judges as a parcel of monkish ignoramuses who know nothing of

the world. Inquire of Christie what can be raised on the Essex estate. Take tickets for benefits, and give them to distant cousins, and your *people* in the housekeeper's room. Fill the parks on Sunday, and place blood-horses in curricles, that there may be no dearth of accidents.

JUNE. Prepare for the birth-day; consult often with milliners and mantua-makers; continue public breakfasts, and midnight dinners; think of leaving town; it begins to be horrible; wonder at the impertinence of tradesmen sending in bills of four, five, and six years old; and consider the propriety of another trip to Paris.

JULY. The Parliament still obstinate; give *fêtes champêtre*, and push on the breakfasts to evening; give balls before dinner, and go to bed next day. Begin to think in earnest of leaving town, but be not hasty in determining where to go; and least of all, to go to your own mansion in the country. Give hints of a new equipage, to dazzle the *elegantes* of Paris.

AUGUST. Visit Brighthelmstone, Cheltenham, Tunbridge, &c.; make small routs fit for villages; get new acquaintances, and erect columns in the newspapers, to the memory of

your walks and rides, dinners and dances, *dejeunés* and *petits soupers*. Plant *Crim. Cons.* for the winter, and prepare to astonish the publick with some wonderful *faux pas*.

SEPTEMBER. Visit Paris, and find every thing superior to Old England. Squeeze to see Buonaparte, and write home his height, and breadth, and the form of his mouth, nose, chin, and forehead: take particular notice of his eyes; and if he say nothing, make a neat reply for him. Visit the national museum and galleries, and admire every thing beyond all power of expression—but don't ask how any thing came there.

OCTOBER. As the weather becomes colder, throw off some part of the summer dress; visit Margate about the time the *cits* leave it; attempt public breakfasts and balloons, speculate on ass-races, and men jumping in sacks. Be out late at night, as colds caught now are more durable than at any other season. A few duels may be practised this month with great *eclat*, and it is a good time to *elope*.

NOVEMBER. Retire for a few weeks to the family mansion, to recruit; inspect the accompts, and ways and means for the winter; fell the oaks, and plant mortgages for Brookes's. See what can be raised upon the stud, and

write to Tattersal. The weather being now very cold and bleak, finish the summer at Brighton.

DECEMBER. Come to town for a few days, if Parliament should meet: be present at Court, and at the division of the House; go directly into the country to spend Christmas with some friend, but as distant as possible from your own tenants. Plant causes, and fee counsel for next term.

I may safely appeal to my readers, whether advice of this nature, varied according to circumstances, would not be more appropriate to the generality of the WORLD, than that perpetual care which Mr. Cardanus Rider advises us to take of our cabbages and our health; or those anxious precepts he delivers on the sowing of turnips and the eating of salt meat. Yet let it not be thought that I would wish to restrict our Astrologers entirely to the affairs of this lower world. They may still consult the stars, although for different purposes. They may still amuse the world by calculating a divorce, upon the same principles they calculate an eclipse; for the transit of Mercury, they may predict the fate of an embassy; and instead of comets threatening destruction, let them foretell the consequences of French

theatres erected in an English metropolis. As to *terms*, they may omit that article altogether, since the pleasurable world is resolved, to keep no terms; and instead of Saints' *days*, it would be a great improvement to decorate the kalendar with ladies' *nights*.

THE PROJECTOR. N° 14.

> "The soldier's witty on the sailor,
> The barber drolls upon the taylor:
> And he who makes the nation's wills,
> Laughs at the doctor and his pills."
>
> CAWTHORN.

January 1803.

IT is observable that while we are on many occasions complaining of the scarcity of some articles, either of necessity or luxury, and of the degeneracy of others, the topics of ridicule seem to be always on the increase. Whether things in themselves are become more ridiculous, or whether mankind in general are now endowed with an extraordinary portion of wit,

are questions which I shall not pretend to determine. But I may assert with safety, that amidst all our difficulties or calamities of a public or private nature, we have not been induced to forget or lay aside any of those incentives to laughter which have been handed down to us from father to son, and which we seem disposed to convey to our posterity, not only without injury or dilapidation, but with very considerable additions and improvements. Indeed, if the state of ridicule goes on in its present progressive flow and swell, we may expect that, at some future and perhaps not very distant period, every object will be a joke, and every man a wit.

But, besides that new fund for ridicule which the various and ever-changing manners of the age present, there are, it may be observed, a set of standing topics, which some hundreds of years have not been able to wear out, and which will probably last as long as laughter itself, that is, as long as man can be defined *animal risibile;* for, if I mistake not, Naturalists have determined that no other animal laughs. And this is a doctrine which I am least inclined to call in question when I observe the treatment bestowed upon the most useful of the brute creation in this metropolis,

and which would certainly have no tendency to excite the risible faculties, if the hackney or dray horse, or the cattle in Smithfield, had the happiness to possess such powers of expression.

Among these standing topics of ridicule, we are, it must be allowed, good-humoured enough not to spare ourselves. *Man* is a perpetual fund of ridicule; first in his single state, when he has a certain number of jokes to bear, long before he arrives at that general subject of ridicule, an old bachelor; an old, fusty, useless fellow, that drones and sleeps away his time, does no good in his generation, and leaves his fortune to his bed-maker, or his milk-woman. Secondly, if he escapes this series of provocatives of laughter, he only exchanges it for one more fertile and copious, the married man, the hen-pecked husband, one who dares not say his soul is his own, married to "a creature of a wife, and every body wonders what he could see in her;" with a parcel of squalling brats, and a thousand stories and *bon mots* from Joe Miller and Ben Jonson, on cuckolds and horns, and Doctors Commons; for, while marriage is reckoned a very good joke, a divorce is the best joke of all, and will supply clubs of wits and columns of newspapers for a month. The

fair sex, too, come in for a plentiful share of the ridicule bestowed on the species, and there is one state peculiar to them of which they exclusively enjoy all the produce of laughter; for, besides the common sarcasms on old maids and wives, when they come to be widows they are universally accounted fair game. In this state, especially if they happen to be rich and young (although age or poverty is not always a serious matter), they are be-rhimed and be-prosed with no great degree of delicacy. To the species in general also belongs a vast fund of wit, at the expense of natural defects, lameness, blindness, deformity; and persons above six feet, or under four, are butts for many a thread-bare jest.

If we next look to the Learned Professions, we shall find that they have always been fertile in topics of ridicule. The Divine has certain probationary jokes to go through when only a poor *parson*, a word that once had a serious meaning, but is generally now applied as a humorous epithet. As he advances, he is honoured with a fresh set of allusions to fatness and sleep, which seem to be either the qualifications or the consequences of a good benefice; and now we hear much of Dean Drowsy, Dr. Paunch, Archdeacon Spintext, &c. &c.;

until we arrive at the Bishops' bench, wher, we must encounter another string of quibbles and puns upon mitres, lawn-sleeves, &c. Perhaps these might be tolerated by the Dignitaries of the Church; and perhaps, indeed, no man ought to hold a living who cannot take a joke; but our wit does not always end in personalities; and whoever considers the present state of ridicule as applied to the Clergy, will perceive that the design of many wits lies deeper than the merely raising a laugh at the tenant of a pulpit, or the thumper of a cushion.

As to the Law, which we generally rank as the second of the learned professions, we may observe a crowd of jokes following the Lawyer, from the Attorney's desk to the Chancellor's woolsack. It may not perhaps be quite safe to detail these jokes in this place; but it is no secret that frequent bursts of laughter accompany the names of Attorney and Barrister when the epithet "honest" happens to be joined with them; and that fees, briefs, parchments, gowns, and wigs, have been never-failing sources of mirth to our forefathers. These jokes also are likely to be perpetuated to the latest posterity by frequent repetition and traditionary animosity, heightened perhaps by some degree of experience. But truth obliges

me to say, that the gentlemen of the Bar are somewhat to blame, in cultivating wit themselves, as an essential branch of their profession. I allow of their writing comedies, and prologues, and superintending the business of the Theatre, because that may be pardonable when they have nothing else to do. But when I read so frequently as of late, that the Court has been "thrown into a fit of laughter," at a time when property and character are at stake, I hope I shall be forgiven for hinting, that they who are so "witty in themselves" must not complain if they are now and then "the cause that there is wit in other men."

The grave profession of Physick, one would imagine, might screen its professors from ridicule, as the natural tendency of sickness and death is to make men serious. But, alas! nothing can resist the impulses of wit; and we have perhaps a larger collection of standing jokes upon Physicians, Surgeons, and Apothecaries, than on any other class of men. One would suppose, indeed, that they were a plague inflicted by Providence for the sins of mankind, or an army sent out by Government with orders to give no quarter, or spare man, woman, or child. The coarsest of these witticisms are generally squirted at the Apothe-

caries; but the Doctor in his carriage has no protection. They are, says a wit, like the antient Britons in their mode of warfare, " some slay in chariots, and some on foot:" and when a dramatic writer wishes for a character to relieve the dulness of his original invention, he generally goes to Warwick-lane, or Black-friars. Sickness, indeed, it is observed, puts an end to these jokes, and we hear no sallies at the expence of the phial or the prescription; but it may be observed at the same time, that as soon as the patient begins to be witty on the " quizz of an Apothecary," or the " prig of a Doctor," with their " confounded slops" and " *repetatur haustuses*," all his relations hail the happy omen, and proclaim him " out of danger;" the return of wit being generally accounted better for the constitution than any kind of repentance.

If from these learned professions we pass to the mechanical branches, to trade and commerce, we shall experience a wonderful flow of humour; and many standing jests bandied from trade to trade, each man thinking there is something particularly ridiculous in his neighbour's trade, while his neighbour holds exactly the same opinion of his. Taylors have been time immemorial the butt of all wits, and their

occupation is coupled with the frequent mention of a little dappled animal that would not otherwise be mentioned in genteel company without disrespect, and perhaps some unpleasant sensations. The benevolent Mr. Jonas Hanway tells us of a master chimney-sweeper, who, instead of correcting his boys with the accustomed severity of the sooty trade, terrified them into good behaviour by threatening to make them *Taylors*—an object of abhorrence which never failed to produce a salutary effect.

Why Taylors, against whom nothing more serious has been alleged, than a predilection for a certain vegetable, and some small defects in the art of horsemanship, and that principally on the Brentford road, should be thus attacked by all ranks, from the comedy-writer, to the chimney-sweep; from Shakspeare, to the morning papers; is a question of which I have never seen any satisfactory solution. If we consider their usefulness in society, we must be sensible that they are very unjustly treated. The adorning of the person is very much their study; and so eminent is their skill in improving, or hiding the defects of nature, and even of education, that not a beau or fine gentleman in the kingdom could exist a month

without them. From the King's levee, to the City ball, how extensive is their influence, and what a grandeur, splendour, and neatness, do they every where diffuse! And when we consider the various means by which love enters the susceptible mind, and particularly the well-known attractions of a scarlet coat, is it saying too much that the Taylor is an extensive contributor to the tender passion, and that his occupation is justly termed an "art and mystery?" I know, therefore, of no reason why these sedentary friends to beauty and gallantry should be exposed to ridicule, and even denied their fair proportion of manhood; unless we may impute their treatment to that unthankfulness and ingratitude, of which the human species may be sometimes guilty. In France, we know that Stage-players, however flattered, admired, and enriched in their lives, were denied Christian burial; and much as we affect to prize, and pride ourselves on dramatic entertainments in this country, it is notorious that until of late, the principal frequenters of our Theatres harboured prejudices against the Players, as strong as those of the persons who never enter their doors. But as a more liberal spirit seems now to prevail, and a player is thought capable of being a Christian, let us

hope that in time a Taylor may be accounted a man.

I have dwelt too long on this subject, to enter minutely into a consideration of the wit which belongs to other trades, or to hint at the many pleasantries of our shops and warehouses. My readers may, however, probably recollect most of the witticisms that are circulated, within the bills of mortality, behind the counter. But I must not omit that, in this general propagation of jokes, no exemption is made in favour of Corporations and Corporate Bodies. I speak it with regret, but it must be spoken, that the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Common Council of London, have not been able to escape the ridicule of wicked wits, who crack their jokes upon these right worshipful Magistrates, without the least respect for the chair, the mace, or the gold chain; and even the gentlemen of the Livery have been known to smile in each other's faces, at some unlucky hit of pleasantry. Wits, of all men, have the least notion of subordination; otherwise we should not hear so much ridicule directed against such grave persons as Magistrates, satisfying the wants of nature, and exercising the privileges of office, on venison and turtle. Yet this licentiousness is but too

obvious in our newspapers, which have long served up a collection of jests half-yearly on these respectable personages, namely, on the eve of Lord Mayor's Day, and on Easter Monday. Veneration surely ought to be kept up for high offices, and men in high offices; but what veneration can be expected from wits, whose notions of merit are so confused, that they look to nothing in a Magistrate but his appetite, and who, with the ignorance of the blind man, who fancied that scarlet was like the sound of a trumpet, can conceive no higher of an Alderman's gown, than by supposing it to resemble a perpetual dinner?

Amidst this general disposition to be merry at each other's expence, there yet remains one class to be mentioned, who are in a very pointed manner the subjects of certain standing jokes—I mean Projectors, of the order of the quill. On their sufferings, however, it is incumbent that I should speak with delicacy; they are sometimes themselves Wits by profession, and may therefore expect that part of the goods they send out may be returned upon them, to their loss. They are notwithstanding a poor persecuted class, and continually exposed to the taunts and jeers of the rest of the world. Of this, I was very sensible lately,

when, in perusing a treatise on the transmigration of souls, I found that no punishment was devised for bad Authors in that system, because it was thought that no situation could be worse than theirs. And while they are thus beset with witticisms, from those who must borrow them to make up the defects of their own wit, or steal them rather than not have a hit at the tenants of Grub-street, they are deprived of the ordinary resources of persons in a state of persecution. They cannot even be proud in their own defence: for who will take pride at their hands? Not the servants of their patrons: for they understand no pride but that of riches, and stare at a live author, as they would at any of the animals in the Tower.

It is pleasant, however, upon the whole of this subject, to reflect, that the publick is provided with such an infinite fund of Wit, and that it is deposited in the hands of men of all professions, trades, and callings, and of all parties, for none are so witty as Tories and Whigs, ins and outs, high church and low church. We have only to be apprehensive, that Wit, by being thus scattered abroad so extensively, will lose some of the virtue it has when concentrated, and issued only at proper times and seasons, and in such quantities as

the public wants require. Perhaps it is owing to this, that what was once said of the learning of a certain Northern nation, may be applied to our Wit. "Every man has a mouthful, but none a bellyful." It is true that we have pulpit jokes, and bar jokes, and shopkeepers' jests, and warehousemen's repartees; but in the theatres, which in my memory had a monopoly of the article, I am told the audiences would sit with as much gravity as in the church, if it were not for the facetiousness of the carpenters and scene-shifters, and the striking humour of Harlequin and the Clown. The breaking up of the theatrical monopoly was certainly fatal; for, although some of our dramatic writers have collected from jest books a cargo sufficient to set up with, it is rare that they can carry on trade long, by thus furbishing up second-hand articles; and if they depend on their own stock, they soon become insolvent.

But while we have thus adverted to the general application of Wit to all things, and all persons, it cannot be concealed that, in the opinion of some very good judges, it is high time to call in much of our old humourous coin, and make a fresh issue for the advantage of modern times and circumstances. All that

respects the vices of the age, and all that touches with a sneer on the religion of the country, may be spared, in cases where both appear too serious for such a mode of treatment. On the other hand, the novelties imported, or likely to be imported, from a neighbouring nation, and the vast commerce of levity nearly established, as it will soon be too great for the coin now in circulation, so it will demand a *paper currency*, some few *notes* of which may probably pass through the hands of my good friend Mr. Sylvanus Urban.

THE PROJECTOR. N° 15.

February 1803.

I SHALL dedicate the whole of this paper to the communications of two or three correspondents.

"TO THE AUTHOR OF THE PROJECTOR.

"SIR,

"I am convinced I need not inform a Projector of your turn, that much of the phra-

seology of the English language is metaphorical, and borrowed from the most common, and, what some reckon, the most vulgar trades and occupations. This you must be sensible is the case, every time you act candidly and *above board*, and every time that in *handling* a subject, you chuse to take *fresh ground*, or avoid *interlarding* your matter with digressions, and thereby *breaking the thread* of your discourse.

"Among these borrowed allusions which we have *pressed* into the common *service*, there is one in every body's *mouth*, and applied to many authors of the last and present generation, when we say that they have *coined* new words. At what time this liberty was first taken with the *Mint*, I know not; it may, perhaps, be coëval with the mint itself. Our coinage, it is well known, was greatly reformed in King William's reign, when the *mill* was adopted instead of the *hammer*: but perhaps the phrase *coining words* may, as I have hinted, be much older; for, from the way in which some of our new words are *executed*, from the want of a *clear head*, a *legible inscription*, and a proper *reverse*, we may say with as much propriety that they are *hammered*, as that they are milled.

"But in whatever way this question may be determined, I am as fond of *similitude* as John Bunyan, and cannot therefore but discover many beauties in comparing the manufacture of a new word to the operations of the Mint, since some words are coined which are really "as good as gold," while others are not worth more than counterfeits, and can only pass *among a number*. And as there are some *coins* which can only be found in the cabinets of the curious, or in the pockets of the rich, so there are some of our *new words* which become the mouths only of the learned or the great.

"But, Mr. PROJECTOR, you cannot be ignorant that the practice of *coining new words* has occasioned many disputes in the learned world, which every lover of peace and uniformity would wish to see settled by a fixed standard. Some consider it as a capital felony, for which the convicts deserve to be drawn on a hurdle through Paternoster-row, pilloried in Grub-street, and afterwards executed in the Reviews according to the statute of criticism, while others are of opinion that certain persons may be privileged to *coin* words which the literary world are then to receive into currency.

"I should myself incline to the latter opinion, if it had been previously agreed who were the persons to whom a privilege should be given, which, as far as respects money, has been in all nations reserved by the existing governments as too dangerous for any subject to possess. But authorities are here silent; and within the last century words have obtained a circulation among us, which we can with some difficulty trace to the coiners, but which have been adopted more for their beauty, or supposed beauty, than from any defect in the regular issues from the authorized mint.

"And this, by the way, suggests to me a previous question, and of more importance than even that of the privilege of coining; I mean, whether there is such a defect in our regular circulating specie, as to oblige us to call in any part for re-coining, or to have recourse to an entire new coinage? This question seems to be determined in the affirmative by various classes of people, and, in general, by all who readily adopt whatever new-coined words appear, whoever may have been their inventors.

"*People of fashion*, in particular, have a set of new words, very shining and polished in appearance, which obtain among them a large circulation, however unshapely and uncouth

they may seem in the eyes of collectors, and although they are refused in all legal tenders. They are admirably adapted, however, for the traffick of certain great houses in Pall Mall and St. James's street, and from their being very widely circulated, in *loose change*, by certain female Bankers and lettered Countesses *, they are, in compliance with a very customary pronunciation, known by the name of BRIM-*igams*.

"Persons in a lower rank of life, who content themselves with the manners of fashion at second-hand, have likewise a pretty extensive coinage of words, such as *bore*, *quiz*, *twaddle*, *tippy*, &c. which are poorly executed as to the *die*, and may be very easily counterfeited. They are of small value, and given among the *poor* in the parks and play-houses, and, if I understand the matter right, seem to come under the denomination of *tradesmen's tokens*.

"Modern philosophers are another class who have long deplored the scarcity of our specie for *their* wants, and have consequently entered into the *coining line*, melting down

* My correspondent seems here to allude to those ladies who keep Faro Banks and E. O. tables, and whom the late worthy Chief Justice of the King's Bench noticed in terms not very gallant.

the good old metal of *religion*, *order*, *government*, *social affections*, into *superstiticn*, *bigotry*, *energies*, *perfectibility*, and other counterfeits, which have lately been too much in circulation, but are now principally confined to their own narrow circles, or are to be found in the cabinets of those collectors who form museums of any kind of trash whatever, more with a view to record the absurdities of their times, than from any value they set upon the articles themselves. It is much to the credit, however, of our legal coinage, that when these philosophers began to establish their trade, they could not find in our language words which could possibly be hammered into their meaning. By the use of a proportion of French metal, mixed with some of the base kind from their own mines, they endeavoured for a while to make their principles pass with the unsuspecting; but the cheat was soon discovered by weighing a *crown* against any quantity of their counterfeits, and especially was brought into disgrace when some of the coiners attempted a few years ago to get at the *Tower* mark.

" There is another class who, although they do not strictly come within the imputation of coining, have an equal share in the debase-

ment of our current coin. This class is composed of those who, taking up the same opinion of the want of a circulating medium, are eager to import foreign coin, and particularly French. This has had a very considerable effect on the commodities in which this country formerly dealt, insomuch that we have now no *lovers of the arts*, but in their stead a description of people called *amateurs:* no actor now makes a *first appearance*, although a great many have this year made their *debut*. Our ladies, I am sorry to betray family secrets so much as to make this remark, no longer use *shifts*, but a sort of, I know not what, they call a *chemise;* on the other hand, however, I must confess that female character and chastity have been so extensively promoted, that a kept woman is no longer heard of, although some gentlemen prefer a *chere amie* to a wife, which I suppose is a better sort of domestic; and as to bad women or strumpets, as they used to be called, there are no such animals in the kingdom, notwithstanding occasionally we hear of a *demirep* or a *fille de joie*. The abominable crime of adultery has also vanished; and it is with some difficulty that we can recollect the idea of it, by being now and then told of a lady having made a

faux pas, or of a gentleman having a *tendresse* for his friend's wife.

"These premises being considered, Mr. PROJECTOR, I come now to the purpose of my letter, which is to suggest to your meditation, the propriety of a Project to remedy the evils of *coining*, and also of the importation of foreign pieces. In what manner this is to be contrived, I shall not pretend to suggest, as that might seem to interfere with your projectorial wisdom; but I hope you will first determine the grand question, whether our language be so impoverished by time and use as to render a new coinage of words necessary: and then you may with some propriety enter upon the consideration of what individual or individuals are to be permitted the privilege of coining. The present state of our coinage sufficiently shews that it ought to be placed in some hands of great authority, for the same wise reasons that all governments have thought fit to reserve it as a power belonging to the crown; and I trust it will be found that the same necessity exists in the commonwealth of letters. I am, Sir,

"Your humble servant,

"OLD BULLION."

My correspondent's request will require consideration. The evils he complains of have not escaped my inspection; but he must be aware that it would be presumption in an individual to dictate to a government, although it be the common presumption of Projectors.

The grievance complained of by my next correspondent comes more immediately within my province.

"TO THE PROJECTOR.

"SIR,

"ALTHOUGH you have now completed a year's lucubrations without taking into consideration the affairs of the stage, yet I hope you do not mean so far to depart from the custom of your predecessors as to omit that amusement. Its present state may afford you many reflections suited to the nature of your paper, which I shall not here anticipate. Permit me, however, to point out one abuse, which has grown of late years into a most shameful enormity, and seems to call loudly for reformation.

"It is commonly said, that the stage is much reformed from what it was in the licentious days of Charles II. and that there is less immorality and indecency in our plays.

This I am not unwilling to allow, although a lover of the drama will probably regret that our wit disappeared with our indecency, and that when we became moral we became dull. Be this as it may, of late years we seem to be falling into a species of immorality which is not of the kind that is likely to bring wit with it—I mean, the habit of cursing and swearing, so very general in our new comedies. I can remember the time when a very favourite actor, who could presume a little upon the indulgence of the town, would *rap out*, as we say, an oath which was not to be found in his author; yet an actor of less popularity would not at that period have ventured upon this insult to refined manners, and, I may add, to the religion of his country. But the case now is so much altered, that our dramatic writers provide their favourite actors with a stated quantity of *dammees*, which must be committed to memory with equal attention as any other words of the part, and I should not wonder if an actor should hereafter be d—n'd for misplacing a curse, or a play be hissed for being deficient in oaths.

I have had my attention particularly directed to this subject by the extracts lately given in the Reviews of some of these new plays, in which the author seems to be *upon oath* on

every thing he says, and the spectator, on his return from the theatre, may say, with all the gravity of a justice, "Sworn before me, this 26th of February." I cannot help thinking, Sir, that such authors abuse the patience of the publick rather too much. The publick allows them the privilege of being as dull as they please; and managers, if we may judge from recent plays, no more expect wit in a play than in a sermon. It is too much, therefore, seeing they are so highly privileged, that they should introduce the language of the streets, and that of the lowest of the streets too, in a place where we at least expect decent if not elegant language, and polished dialogue.

"I am convinced, Sir, that the enormity of which I complain would appear incredible to those who are not frequenters of the theatre; but I can now appeal to the printed records of the stage. It is well known that the custom of writing plays is now to fit a certain kind of language for a certain kind of actor, and this is called 'taking his measure' for the part. In consequence of this very wise practice (which, by the way, shews that our dramatic authors have no eye to distant fame), I could point out the actors who are thus regularly supplied with oaths and curses, because they are supposed to have a particular

knack at uttering them with a sort of emphatic sound which passes for wit, and in the vicinity of Dyott-street or Billingsgate really may be wit.

"I hope, Sir, that when you take into consideration the state of the theatre, you will not omit this striking improvement. I am, Sir,

"Yours,

"A PLAY-GOER."

My correspondent has at least truth on his side. The abuse of which he complains is too common and obvious to require proof. It has been increasing for the last ten years; but it has been so frequently adverted to in the public prints, without remedy on the part of those who are the guardians of the stage, that what my correspondent recommends seems to be more within the province of the magistrate than of the moralist. The latter, however, may be permitted to remark as somewhat very singular, that an indecency should be tolerated in what is reckoned our most refined amusement, which is banished by general consent from all companies, except the lowest.

Although these letters have completed my allowance of room, I am inclined to admit another from a facetious correspondent; to

whom, however, I must hint, that he has every claim to my attention, except that of originality.

"TO THE AUTHOR OF THE PROJECTOR.

"SIR

"As you recommend brevity to your correspondents, I hope you will insert this letter, from your humble servant,

"A FRIEND TO DISCUSSION."

THE PROJECTOR. N° 16.

March 1803.

"MR. PROJECTOR, *Lambeth, Feb.* 14.

"THE old adage, that 'there is nothing new under the sun,' though trite, is certainly true. To this, Sir, yourself and your learned labours bear equal testimony. Not to enter into the display of learning which a Delphin Index would readily furnish on the subject, it may be sufficient to glance at the Academy for PRO-

JECTORS established by royal authority in the capital of Balnibarbi, and the PROJECT at Laputa (which would not be unuseful in England) for writing books mechanically. There have been PROJECTORS in all ages of the world; and among the number was your illustrious prototype Sir Richard Steele—

'A Chemist he, whose vain *Projection* broke!'

"Not only in the name, but in the very design and execution of the Essays, have you been forestalled: nor is it difficult to trace in every one of your papers, that the Author of them has given 'his days and nights' to the study of ADDISON *. After this palpable detection, presume not to pique yourself on originality; but candidly acknowledge that there is 'nothing new under the sun.' As every rule, however, has its exceptions, I must admit the vagaries of Fortune, respecting the Colossus who doth bestride the broad Continent of Europe, to be *one*.

"To illustrate my original position, I shall transcribe from a periodical paper, printed in 1705-6 (which shall be nameless, that your

* I have omitted some part of my Correspondent's Letter here, as too flattering to these humble attempts; and, perhaps, have retained too much.

ingenious readers may have the pleasure of *guessing)*, such a picture of MODERN MANNERS as might fairly have been produced by an Essayist of the present hour; and, with every good wish for the prosperity of all your PROJECTS, am, Sir, your friend and admirer,

"QUIDNUNC."

"THERE are many ways by which persons become *insolvent*; many times by mere Providence in losses at sea; of this we must not complain, but rather pity their misfortunes; but oftener by their own mismanagements and extravagance, by over-trading themselves, being ambitious of wealth, or by giving and taking such extravagant credit, as, upon the least stop of cash, their reputation is broken, and themselves afterwards.

"It is evident that our trading forefathers never made such failures in the world as their successors have done. This may be proved from the statutes of *bankrupts* at this time on the file; but when virtue, honour, honesty, and a good conscience in trade, are laid aside, ruin and destruction must take place. The Romans never supported their commonwealth after they lost their virtue. Our virtuous ancestors, were they alive, would be astonished

at the figure some traders make in the world, who, in their days, would have been esteemed as petty chapmen; and, by thus deviating from the customs and good usages of our ancestors, almost all societies of men are dwindled far beneath the reputation of the antients.

"The antient traders never made a show, a pompous vanity, either in habit or entertainment; they were plain and decent in their clothing; the furniture of their houses was substantial, more for use than ornament; their fashions did not alter at every turn; but a set of furniture lasted from generation to generation.

"The case is now quite altered, and every one may conclude it to be a turn of *French politicks* upon our vanity and weakness, first by working our Court into their fashions, that is, persuading them to put themselves into the French king's livery, and then working the City into the fashions of the Court; by which means our courtiers neglected the business of state, the French politicks became as fashionable as the French dress; and by this means the *French Tyrant* became formidable enough to maintain a war against the united strength of Europe.

"But the *French effeminacy* being introduced, the court could never have lessened the strength of England, had not the *traders* been also debauched. Had these kept their pristine virtue, and trod in the paths of their sober and honest ancestors, France had never made its earnings of us; for, whilst the traders and the common people had supported the wealth, we need never have questioned the strength of the kingdom. But here we were touched in the sensible part; lines of communication were opened betwixt the City and the Playhouse; nothing but gaiety, foppery, and pedantry, were to be found in the shops at the Exchange, and other parts of the city, till at length, by the habit, we could not know a lord from a citizen.

"A great part of a *tradesman's stock*, now-a-days, goes away in fitting-up his shop, and furnishing his house, which must be done after the fashion too; and a year or two after, if he can hold it so long, he marries, and then, perhaps, *Madam* does not like the furniture, and so she must have new of a better fashion. Their entertainments are answerable to their furniture, every thing in the season; for there is a mode of eating and drinking too; their meat must be nicely dressed, cooked up with

the finest sauces, unwholesome both for pocket and body; and, to evidence their frugality, it is become a proverb, 'that such a one treats like a prince.'

"Much different is this from the frugality of their ancestors, whose provision was plain and wholesome, nothing wanting, and nothing extravagant. It was not then beneath them to bake their own bread, and brew their own beer, which now not one citizen's wife in twenty understands. They were generous enough in their entertainments, especially to the poor, for whom they had spread tables, particularly at Christmas, and on the Sundays; but the entertainments for their friends, though they were never penurious, yet they were frugal, as may be judged by the proverb of those days, 'that a shoulder of mutton and a capon is a citizen's treat.'

"But to such a height of extravagance are the citizens now grown, that if they do not live high, follow the mode, and make a topping figure in the world, their stability and credit is presently questioned. If they follow the frugal way of their ancestors, this antiquated mode is presently imputed to poverty; so that many citizens, in declining circumstances, are forced to keep up a port and

grandeur, to keep up their reputations; and if they are charged a thousand pound stock to the tax, they dare not swear themselves off, but pay the assessment, otherwise with their own mouths they will proclaim their own disability. And thus *vicious habits* in time become *necessary helps* to self-preservation."

As a proof that I think myself obliged to my Correspondent, I have ordered an immediate insertion of his Letter, and also of the Extract, in which, when we read it with an eye to modern manners, it must be confessed there are some remarkable coincidences. Want of œconomy is certainly not a new failing; and it ought to humble the pride of Projectors, that such failings become old and habitual in spite of all their contrivances. On the other hand, however, I think it but justice to state, that it likewise ought to humble the pride of the extravagant and foolish, when they reflect that they have not one mode of ruining themselves which was not practised a century ago, and in which their ingenuity has never been able to make the smallest improvement. Whatever may be thought of the splendour, *ton*, fashion, or gentility of those who quickly *dash* through business or estates, they are but blindly

following their predecessors, without being able to attempt a single stroke of novelty, which may vary our surprise or our pity.

The usual modes by which men are led to insolvency are indeed so trite and hackneyed, and their progress so certain, that one would expect persons of any taste or talents would be ashamed to do what every blockhead can do, or to do no more than every blockhead actually performs. I have sometimes considered the Gazette as a building, to which, in former days, there were more avenues than at present; but that those who were travelling that way, chose two or three of them, merely because they were most frequented, most easy of access, and led soonest to the journey's end. These roads would consequently have required repairs long ago, if the passengers had not been more anxious to accomplish their journey, than to mind how very dirty, mean, and dangerous the road is, what numerous obstructions from piles of ruins and rubbish, and what numerous deviations they are obliged to comply with.

There is one passage in the conclusion of the above Extract, which shews the stability of public opinion in certain cases, and that if we once adopt a particular habit of thinking, it requires at least more than a century before we

quit it. The passage to which I allude is this: "To such a height of extravagance are the citizens now grown, that if they do not live high, follow the mode, and make a topping figure in the world, their stability and credit is presently questioned." So much is this the case at present, that outward circumstances are considered as the only *criteria* of prosperity, and they are consequently the *criteria* which a man who would be thought prosperous is most anxious to exhibit, and which, thanks to the credulity of mankind, he *may* exhibit for a time with greater ease than he can produce more substantial proofs.

PEREGRINE PUFF, a young man of promising talents, was sent up from a village in the North, to try his fortune in London. All the men of the village shook hands with him at parting, and wished he might turn out *a great man;* and all the women gave him their blessing, and wished he might turn out *a good one.* Peregrine came to town, procured employment, and gave satisfaction.

In a few years an inhabitant of his village came to see him, and saw him in a dress which had never been seen in the village, and heard him converse in a language not understood in the village; and reported on his return that Peregrine was DOING WELL.

Some time after, another inquirer paid him a visit, was asked to dine with him, partook of a piece of roast beef and a pudding, and a bottle of wine from the tavern; and sent word to the village that Peregrine was DOING VASTLY WELL.

Within three years a third was anxious to see his countryman, and saw him on horseback, with a servant behind him, on Sunday morning during divine service; and gladly reported that Peregrine was IN A GREAT WAY.

As this visitor had not had the honour of dining with Peregrine, however, his information was not so satisfactory: the men thought that riding out on Sundays was like a *great man;* but the women doubted whether it would make a *good one.* Another villager, therefore, was dispatched, who was invited to dine with Peregrine: he was introduced into a dining-room as big as a church, and to a party as numerous as a congregation. He immediately wrote back that Peregrine was IN A PRODIGIOUS LINE.

A year or two after, one of the old men who shook hands with Peregrine, wished to renew that ceremony in London; called at nine o'clock, and was much concerned to hear he was not up; begged to know the disorder

which occasioned him to keep his bed. The servant would not satisfy him in that; but assured him, as he seemed so affectionately anxious, that he had not kept his bed *above two hours*. On farther inquiry, this visitor returned home with ample proofs that Peregrine was A VERY GREAT MAN INDEED.

The next kind friend was one who knew men and things: he had not been perfectly satisfied with all he had heard, and therefore determined to see things with his own eyes. Peregrine was remarkably glad to receive him, and invited him to dine next evening at *seven o'clock*. The sagacious villager sat down without appetite to a table of which the ichnography was so perplexing, that for once he was pleased that he had no desire to help himself, and expose his ignorance. He immediately reported that Peregrine would immortalize his name, and enrich his native village either with a BRIDGE or a HOUSE OF CORRECTION, he could not say which.

Six months after this sight, Peregrine offered his creditors one shilling and three pence in the pound, owing to unavoidable losses, in a trade which had had no existence for the last ten years, except in the imaginations of those who estimate prosperity by unnecessary expences and unseasonable hours.

THE PROJECTOR. N° 17.

"Oh, they have lived long on the alms-basket of words! I marvel thy master hath not eaten thee for a word: for thou art not so long by the head as *Honorificabilitudinitatibus.*" SHAKSPEARE, Love's Labour Lost.

April 1803.

IT was foretold that, on the return of Peace, we should receive from France a wonderful accession of important improvements and useful projects; and this is in a great measure confirmed by a scheme, the outline of which I find in a literary journal in the following words:

"MEGALANTHROPOGENESIA.

"For some time a book understood to be preparing, on the ART OF PROPAGATING CHILDREN OF GENIUS, has been a subject of conversation in Paris. And lately the subject was discussed with great gravity in the school of Medicine there: the Thesis on that occasion being, *whether there exists a physico-medical art to augment the intelligence of man by perfecting his organs? Or is* MEGALANTHROPOGENESIA *nothing but an error?*

"The interest excited is said to have been immense; and more than two thousand auditors attended the discussion. We shall give our readers an abridgment of the account we have received of it.

"Citizen Robert, the author of the book mentioned above, laid down the hypothesis, and is represented as having displayed prodigies of learning and ingenuity, to prove that the intelligence of man depends upon the state of his organs; and that by perfecting his organs his intelligence progressively increases. He then pointed out the means of thus perfecting them. The Professors, far from regarding this system as an error, spoke of it as a conception which displayed genius; and they only offered objections, to give the candidate an opportunity of developing completely his ideas. He *pulverized*, we are told, all objections, with such a display of learning, ingenuity, brilliancy of imagination, and quickness of repartee, that the whole Hall frequently resounded with applauses."

It would be needless to inform my readers, that of all Projects which have originated with our lively neighbours, this is by far the most important, and makes all their former schemes for *improvement*, in Church or State, appear

mere trifles. This is a truth so obvious, that I shall leave expressions of amazement to those who are capable of uttering them, and proceed to make some remarks on the Project in detail.

And first, I may be permitted to observe, that every Project of great pith and weight requires in our days to be announced to the world in *sesquipedalian* Greek. This custom, however, our neighbours have borrowed from this country. The first example of it, within my memory, was in the case of a very learned treatise on hair-dressing, which the erudite author entitled *Plocacosmos*. This was followed at no great distance of time by an exhibition called *Eidophusicon*, which, in more senses than one, made the populace stare, and pay their money, if it were only to know the meaning of such a fine word. Then came *Eidouranion*, and that sweet name *Panorama*, with others in all respects too tedious to mention. But it is obvious that Citizen Robert has improved upon these in his *Megalanthropogenesia* by four or five good syllables, and comes the nearest of any modern to the word in my motto, for which we are indebted to Shakspeare, and which Dr. Johnson observes, "whencesoever it comes, is often mentioned as the longest word known." *Honorificabilitu-*

dinitatibus, however, I must observe, is only four syllables longer than Citizen Robert's *Megalanthropogenesia* (it assists the memory to transcribe such words frequently); and when this propagator of genius shall have brought his plan to perfection, which I am as certain he will do, as I am certain that the plan is a rational one, I have no doubt that he will be able, by means of the derivatives of *Megalanthropogenesia*, to come very near, if not go beyond, our *Honorificabilitudinitatibus*. For example, it is natural to suppose that his scheme will create enemies; and they will form a sect, who will of course be called *Anti-megalanthropogenesiasts*. Here we gain two syllables; and a course of lectures, or the philosophical detail of the art of manufacturing geniuses, may be termed here *Megalanthropogenesiology*: here we have two syllables added to the end: and if we make an adjective of this we shall add a third—*siological*, to which, if we prefix the heretical *Anti*, we shall have the longest word in the known world, very properly applied to the greatest Project ever invented. So much for the name.

With regard to the scheme itself, it involves so many considerations of vast weight and importance, that I scarcely know where to begin:

and, if Mr. Urban did not prescribe certain limits to my speculations, I should not know where to end. What, in fact, is this, but a Project to extirpate blockheads, and to create a new world of geniuses, or to teach every man to propagate a genius of any description he pleases, such as may ennoble or dignify his family? How sublime the thought! But, as all the information I have received on the subject is contained in the above short extract, it is impossible to examine the scheme otherwise than in a very general way; and I must be obliged to take some things for granted, which, however, will, I have no doubt, be found in the detail of Citizen Robert's lectures.

In the first place, then, I would say that, under all the circumstances of the case, namely, that it is an infallible method of propagating genius at the option of the propagator, it seems highly proper that it should be placed under the immediate inspection and controul of the existing government. This will be necessary in France, where there may be some danger in the propagation of *Consuls*, and geniuses of that kind, one of whom is enough in a century; and it will be yet more necessary in this country, where the scheme will of course be adopted with the same avidity which follows every plan

of foreign growth. It will be absolutely requisite for the High Court of Parliament to enact such wholesome laws as may limit the number of geniuses, in order that some useful hands may be left in the country, for the purpose of agriculture, manufactures, and other matters, with which no genius will contaminate his time or labour. I am, moreover, confident that our Legislators will see the propriety of restricting genius by positive laws for their own sakes; for if the trade were to remain open but for a year, what a breed of Pitts, Foxes, and Sheridans, might we not expect in every cradle in town! Then, if we look into the City, among the little courts and alleys, and consider the nature of City ambition, we shall find all industry and all hope swallowed up "in perfecting the organs," as Citizen Robert says, of little children, in order to make them Lord Mayors, Aldermen, and Common Councilmen: while others would be manufacturing, by the dozen, East India Directors, Merchants, Underwriters, and other great men, who "are immensely rich, and have a town-house and a country-house." And who knows if this branch of the new philosophy, this perfectibility of organs, would even have the decency to stop short of Contractors and Commissaries?

With respect to the learned professions, it is obvious that the utmost confusion would arise: here would be an equality more alarming, and at the same time certainly more perfect, than the wildest dreams of revolutionists have ever suggested. In the Church all would be Bishops; and in the Law, all Chief Justices, if not Lord Chancellors. A few, indeed, of the opposition-propagators would confine themselves to Dunnings and Erskines; but even of them there would be more in the market than the utmost extent of a spirit of litigation could require. And it is almost needless to add, that the inferior departments of these learned professions would be entirely deserted. Who, indeed, would beget a Curate, or an Attorney, when he could with a little more pains produce a Warburton or a Mansfield? And who would bring an Apothecary into his nursery, when, by the application of Citizen Robert's "physico-medical" recipe, he could enrich his family by a Boerhaave, a Haller, or a Cullen?

Still, under proper restrictions, parents might "perfect the organs" of their children in a way very beneficial to their country. Our Poets are confessedly sufficiently numerous: the addition, therefore, of a few good ones could be no detriment to the honour of the

nation. Some tolerable Dramatic Writers are also wanted; and I know not whether it would not be worth while to make the first trial of Citizen Robert's scheme on this class of geniuses; because, if the report of his success may be credited, the appearance of another Shakspeare would not be miraculous. And, indeed, I have a gentleman in my eye, who, if he had not diverted his talents another way, might have made a second Congreve with the utmost ease.

In the Historical Department, something might be done by the increase of Robertsons, Humes, and Gibbons: but I must know a great deal more of Citizen Robert's *Megalanthropogenesia,* before I entertain very sanguine hopes that he will enable us to produce Addisons and Johnsons, not to speak of Miltons, Swifts, &c.

So little of this new plan has been illustrated, that it is not easy to speculate at any great length, either on its advantages or disadvantages. I am inclined to think, however, that as every species of equality is now destroyed and abolished in France, except equality of submission, Citizen Robert would not have proposed a plan which is to raise *every man* to the rank of a genius. I rather am of opinion,

that his plan is not limited to the production of Poets and Philosophers, who would soon create a famine over the earth, but that it is so comprehensive as to put it in every man's power to propagate, to the utmost perfection, any kind of children he pleases; and for the propagation of which, Citizen Robert will of course furnish him with a sufficient quantity of "perfect organs." If, therefore, the government should want, like the late King of Prussia, to "propagate procerity," as Dr. Johnson very aptly terms it, a corps of Grenadiers might be easily furnished; and I am not quite sure whether the means Frederick adopted for that purpose have not furnished Citizen Robert with the germ, the first thought of his new plan. But I do not wish to take away the merit of one who has added improvements that have all the effect of novelty. I would only hint that, in the eagerness of projection, Citizen Robert may have mistaken a tall man for a great man: his long name for the art seems to strengthen this conjecture; and while we might trust him to make such a gigantic figure as our Dr. Johnson, what moulds, what "perfection of organs," has he provided for such personal zig-zags, and ha!-ha!'s as Voltaire and Pope described?

But still much may be allowed to this "perfection of organs," if we but understood the plan thoroughly. It is not difficult to conceive that men, who perpetually quarrel or are fighting with their wives, might produce very good soldiers and sailors. Valetudinarians, who are always "taking something," and never satisfied unless amidst a confusion of slops, and drops, and pills, might be the making of a medical man. Some classes of the fair sex would be very useful in the production of Orators; and, by consequence, of Members of Parliament, Legislators, and Ministers of state. Persons who marry late in life, if they produced any thing, it would not be unnatural to suppose their progeny would turn out able Antiquaries: and what so easy to conceive as that a man, who had been in the habit of riding for a manufacturer, might bring into the world a distinguished writer of Tours and Travels? All that is wanted, says Citizen Robert, is to "perfect the organs;" and it is to be hoped he will soon communicate that secret to the world.

In the mean time, I do not wish to conceal my fears, even while I announce this discovery with all the honours due to it; and my fears are, that no restrictions of the Legislator will

be hereafter sufficient to stock the country with the necessary quantity of persons who will condescend to handicraft employments. There are some trades which the world very unaccountably stigmatises, or at least mentions with disrespect. I may instance Tailors, Coblers, and some other very useful descriptions of industrious men. Now, if this scheme be adopted, as we may soon expect it will be (for who can resist a French fashion?) we cannot reasonably suppose that such persons will go on propagating the goose and the lap-stone. No; if they are prohibited from making geniuses, they will make what is as bad, Ladies and Gentlemen: even our Farmers will not continually follow the plough, but, by a cross breed with Cornfactors' daughters, will produce a progeny qualified for Bear-key and Mark-lane: and thus in other *lines* we shall find the genealogy interrupted by Citizen Robert's "perfect organs," without its being in the power of government to prevent it. Templars,* instead of producing Cokes and Littletons, will be aiming at Vanburghs and Congreves, and think they have done wonders, if, after many years application to their "organs," they have made a writer of prologues, or Vauxhall songs. And, by what dropped from a

learned Prelate a few days ago, there is reason to fear we shall have Sportsmen and Fox-hunters from those whose duty it is to breed Deans and Rectors.

These objections, which I have thrown out perhaps in a desultory manner, will, I hope, draw the attention of the publick to this plan, that it may be placed under proper regulations before it be adopted. I have only one more remark to make, namely, that Citizen Robert does not mention the Fair Sex in his scheme, although it is reasonable to suppose their assistance may be necessary. Perhaps, indeed, he might not think it requisite to mention what was so obvious; but here, I confess, is a new source of fears on my part. Knowing what matrimonial differences arise from such a trifling circumstance as the naming of a child, may we not be afraid that the particular genius of the child will frequently be a source of equally serious dispute? If the father should insist on a girl who can make a pudding, and the mother on a genius who can write novels, by what compromise shall they be brought to agree? Are we to expect *often* to see a Mrs. Carter, who "could make a pudding as well as translate Epictetus, and work a handkerchief as well as compose a poem?" And, if

such disputes as to what "a child shall be" were frequent long before parents had the advantage of Citizen Robert's preparatory scheme, what will be the case now they are likely to be provided with a set of perfect organs that will manufacture any kind of genius whatever?

These are serious considerations; as such I submit them to my readers in general, and especially to those in France, who, I suppose, will be the first to adopt the plan. It is but fair that it should be tried, and the results known, in that country where it took its rise. As to Citizen Robert, to whom I hope this paper will introduce me, I hail him as a Projector of the very first order, and one who must necessarily be a disinterested Projector; for here is a scheme for which no patent can be procured, which cannot be monopolized, and which is in truth nothing if it be not divulged. For his sake, I could wish it had been sooner known, because in that case, upon his own principle, he might have been enabled to write a more sensible book on the subject!

THE PROJECTOR. Nº 18.

"Suburban villas, highway-side retreats,
That dread the encroachment of our growing streets,
Tight boxes, neatly sash'd, and in a blaze
With all a July sun's collected rays,
Delight the citizen, who, gasping there,
Breathes clouds of dust, and calls it country air."

COWPER.

May 1803.

THE time is now come when the industrious Citizen wishes to leave the cares of the shop and the counting-house to the junior partner, or the *confidential* clerk, and hopes to enjoy a temporary retirement in some of those little Arcadias, and bow-windowed Elysiums, that are so plentifully scattered around the Metropolis. Retirement is the favourite wish of a Citizen's heart; who looks forward with pleasing expectation, and bustles on with industrious rapidity, to the happy hour when he can afford to bid adieu to anxiety, sell off his cares at prime cost, and enter upon real happiness,

which, he thinks, consists in the absence of business. But, alas! no happiness in this world is exempt from the infirmities of our nature; we have not yet been able even to fix the distance at which trade ends, and retirement begins. Wonderful are the differences of opinion on this subject. My old friend Mr. JOSIAH SANDAL, an eminent hosier in Cheapside, chose for the place of his retirement a house facing Honey-lane market*, and was astonished that his cough increased; while his opposite neighbour, a very topping haberdasher, travelled two hundred miles in quest of peace and salubrity, and died of perpetual visits and hunting dinners in the second year of his absence from all that is hurtful.

But the retirement most common at this season is of the temporary kind; and consists either in a visit to a watering place, or in the hiring a snug box for the summer in one of the pleasant villages which supply the Metropolis with vegetables and dust. With respect to the former of these schemes, it is not perhaps necessary to point out what connexion it has with solitude, although it may afford

* My distant readers may not perhaps know that Honey-lane-market is but three or four yards from Cheapside.

ample scope for reflection; but the latter, we might reasonably expect, should administer some of the quiet comforts of rustication. Yet here, too, we are doomed to be disappointed by the eager kindness and friendly importunities of our acquaintance, who think it both a pity and a shame, that we should be quite buried during the vast space which intervenes between Saturday and Monday, and therefore, to alleviate our chagrin and divert our melancholy, very obligingly bring down their families and a Sunday newspaper, and insist on filling up the whole of the time devoted to quiet and reflection.

I was induced to make these remarks by an accidental visit to my friend SOCIUS, who has taken "a pretty box," for the present season, on the banks of the Thames, and within three yards of the bridge turnpike. I happened to call at his town house on Saturday evening, and found the whole family in great confusion; such cording of trunks, and packing of baskets, such calling here and calling there, and, as usual, answering nowhere, such fears lest the coach could not wait, or the tide not serve, that the whole commotion looked more like a flight on the alarm of invasion, than a sober Citizen packing up his Sunday's dinner for his

villa. Three or four friends had kindly promised to bring their families to "eat a mutton-chop," and enjoy the fresh air, with SOCIUS next day: and I trust that every domestic scholar knows that the all-comprehensive word *mutton-chop*, when liberally translated, means beef, veal, ham, fowls, and fish. To carry down this valuable cargo, it was necessary (besides the stage coach, which unaccountably always sets off the moment one wishes it to stay); it was, I found, necessary to put in requisition a boat with two skilful rowers, in order to convey those articles which would be perhaps a little out of their element in land-carriage; such as the fish, which, blabbing the secret by exposing their tails, might become the prey of some ravisher on the road; and the pigeon pie, compounded with such skill, and encrusted with such elegance, which absolutely required to be carried in a certain horizontal position, and with a level motion, that the claws might not be rubbed from the top, nor the gravy be disturbed at the bottom.

But who can enumerate the many unforeseen accidents which happened, when all was apparently shipped on board the Nancy of Hungerford stairs, and my friend and his family were ready to set out? The greens were po-

sitively forgotten; and who does not know that greens are not to be procured in the country? However, upon a strict search, they were found; and the boat had almost cleared the bridge, when the lump of butter was declared missing, another article not to be procured beyond the bills of mortality; and after all, when a swift and fleet courier had supplied this want, it was discovered that two bottles of brandy, and two dozen of the best knives and forks, were not to be found. The brandy, if left at home, was certainly not in the boat; and if consigned to the coach, it must either be drunk, or the bottles broken. Who can recount those numerous anxieties, gently intermixed with the swearing of the boatmen, and the obstinacy of the tide, before, to all human appearance, the whole cargo was got on-board, when I wished my friends a prosperous voyage; comforted with the idea that, if it should prove a long one, they were victualled beyond all dread of famine. I had the happiness afterwards to learn that the whole arrived safe; that they *sat down* eighteen to dinner; and that about a dozen more friends called in the evening who had *accidentally* been taking a ride that way, found it so comfortable that they

drank tea, and syllabub; and, rain coming on, obligingly consented to stay supper.

My friend Socius is one of the most industrious of men: it is natural, therefore, that he should love a little quiet on that day which is more particularly denominated a day of rest. How far it answers its name in his case, may be gathered from what I have just detailed, and which, he assures me, is a fair sample of the kind of retirement which his good friends permit him to enjoy, and to which his hospitable disposition agrees from week to week, still repeating to me, and endeavouring to persuade himself, that "there is nothing so pleasant and good for the health as a country lodging, whither a man may go down on a Saturday night, and be quiet and comfortable, with nobody but his wife and children."

The truth is, however, that these comfortable country-houses are considered by the friends of the tenant as a species of inn upon the plan of ancient times, when the landlord thought himself honoured in administering *gratis* to the necessities of travellers; and being scattered at equal distances round the metropolis, a true Sunday-visitor has only to refresh his memory by looking at the "circular map of the country ten miles round London," and finds

no other difficulty than in solving the question, whether he shall dine with Jack at Putney, or Tom at Wimbledon; with Bill at Blackheath, or with Joe at Clapham? He has his friends in every latitude; and, by dividing his favours equally among them, seems nowhere a troublesome visitor. Some houses, indeed, are more fortunately situated than others, and make a shower of rain a more palpable apology for a call; and I never knew one of your *lovers of retirement* who would not bid eagerly for a house, if the auctioneer assured him that "the stages pass the door every hour." "Alas!" said SOCIUS, who ventures now and then on a pun, "my misfortune is, that the stages *never pass* my door; and if they did, it would avail nothing, for every body now-a-days keeps a horse and a *chay*."

The kindness, however, of those friends who make the tour of the villas in the course of the Summer, is not to be mentioned with slight respect. Whatever may be the immediate intention of some of them, and in general it is nothing worse than to get a dinner without much trouble, the original motive was probably benevolent. Knowing how unfit the greater part of the industrious world is for solitude, they wish to avert the dangers of a Sunday's

ennui, by keeping up a decent connexion betwixt that day and the other six, by buying and selling in theory, driving bargains in imagination, investigating their neighbours' affairs, prophesying tumbles, and wondering at rises, and sometimes, with the assistance of a Sunday news-paper, adjusting the politics of the nation, for which they have no leisure in the course of the week. They are of opinion that it is not good for man to be alone; and with this they connect another position, which I cannot but consider as somewhat heterodox, namely, that a man's own family is no company at all.

Desirable as the pleasures of solitude are, it has long appeared to me, that many of my worthy friends, the Citizens of London, have totally mistaken the *place* where it is to be found; and this mistake arises from their not attending to the changes that have occurred in the size of London, and in the manners of its inhabitants. Fifty years ago the country, properly so called, was within three or four miles of the Royal Exchange, and the Stones-end was a boundary which in most cases might be depended upon; the roads were so inconvenient, that a journey of four or five miles was a serious undertaking; and it was not

then the fashion for *every body* to keep a horse, or even to hire a horse. A citizen in those days, situated about the abovementioned distance, was not likely to have his house mistaken for an inn, or considered as "The *original house* of *call* for *Sabbath-breakers;*" nor was his privacy every day invaded by the same people he had intercourse with all the rest of the week. The case is, however, now altered. Ten, twelve, or even fifteen miles are necessary, in order to keep at a moderate distance from the smoke of London, and, what is worse, from being smoked by those facetious London jockeys who enjoy a Sunday's dinner of another man's providing, and find rare amusement in the embarrassments they create at a place where supplies of provisions are not so easily procured as in the vicinity of Leadenhall market. What interchanges of compliments and apologies, of "unexpected pleasure," and "exceeding sorrow!" These retired Citizens, therefore, who complain of such interruptions, and who, like the ancient Philosopher, are "never less alone than when alone," must learn that there is no safety but in flight, and in removing beyond the circle of a Sunday's ride, which far exceeds the Sabbath-day's journey of the Jews, and cannot (upon an

average, taking bits of blood, and hacks together) be estimated at less than fifteen miles. Perhaps in a few years it may extend much farther; for, although our roads seem already in the highest state of improvement of which they are capable, so many hopeful young gentlemen qualify themselves and their horses to ride for a wager, that they may be expected soon to accomplish the extravagant lover's wish, and "annihilate both time and space."

For those, however, who are really desirous of retirement, who, for whatever reason, wish to enjoy the pleasure of comparative solitude on Sunday, I have a Project, which, after having made trial of it for many years, and never experiencing one failure, I can with great assurance recommend. It is simply this: instead of going to the country, LET THEM STAY IN TOWN. London, of all places in the kingdom, is the best calculated for retirement, and on Sunday in particular bears the most marks of desertion and solitude. In order to prove this, I will mention but one of many ways. Let any of my readers begin at St. Paul's, and inquire how many of the owners of the houses from that to Charing-cross are at home on Sunday. Let him then return to St. Paul's, and make a similar enquiry as far as

Aldgate church: I will be content to rest my opinion on the result of this experiment. But I must condition that he does not make the same trial in the West-end of the town, because the Metropolis operates upon people of fashion exactly as the Country operates on the citizens; and because, what with Sunday dinners and Sunday concerts, or, to use the language of news-papers, "Sunday parties," that quarter of the Metropolis really has some symptoms of population; and, if I am not misinformed, a very considerable traffick is carried on among the moneyed interest, by means of exchanging paper, which differs from Bank paper, not in being less valuable, but in being more thick.

London is therefore the place for retirement; for, where can a man live more retired than in a City from which all his neighbours have made their escape, and in which friends and acquaintance are too widely scattered to meet often, or to meet alltogether? Now, whoever has made trial of rural solitude, or, more properly speaking, village society, knows that the reverse of all this is the case. This Project of mine, therefore, will, I hope, meet with the attention it deserves; and if those who choose to put it into practice have any timidity

left, and are fearful of being apprehended at home by the kidnappers of time and quiet, they may escape the interruption of many of them at least, by the simple, though rather old-fashioned custom of going to church; a place not absolutely devoted to retirement, yet eminently useful for the best purposes which retirement is calculated to promote, and, indeed, the only purposes for which it is desirable.

I would also beg leave to hint, with respect to retirement either of the temporary or permanent kind, that the *place where* is not the only mistake current among men of business. There is reason to think that the thing itself is not sufficiently understood, and that some men rush into retirement as they rush into other grand speculations, without considering what must be their fate if it does not succeed. We are often reminded that a capital is necessary to commence business; but few seem to be aware that a certain capital is also necessary to leave off trade, and a capital of that sort which a man cannot draw out of the hands of his banker. Resources great and permanent are requisite to carry on the business of retirement without considerable risks, and those instances of stagnation which are sometimes read in the verdicts of grave and worshipful Coroners. This arises,

not to mention many other causes, from men's neglecting to keep proper *books*, and by frequent inspection inquiring how their affairs stand, what time they have for business, and what for *'Change*. But all this is generally very ill understood; and, to remedy the evil, I once drew up a plan of an "Hospital for Retired Citizens," which, although it met with the approbation of some of the faculty, was not very cordially received by the objects who were to be benefited. I have, therefore, of late meditated a Project which I hope will be more acceptable, and have regularly digested it into "A Course of Lectures on the Art of Retirement," which I may probably soon communicate for the benefit of my fellow citizens. These Lectures are humbly intended to qualify a man for being proper company to himself, and to teach him how to live with tolerable comfort even upon the supposition that there were not a fishing-rod, a bowling-green, or a set of Dutch-pins, left in the world. In them also are some curious recipes for the alleviation of a rainy day, a calamity to which retired persons are particularly subject, and which sometimes afflicts a whole family, and drives them to the bottle, and other noxious means of relieving pain. But these and many other par-

ticulars will be amply detailed in the Prospectus, which, for the better circulation, I shall order to be delivered by the Conveyancers along with every lease of a villa which they are employed to draw up. Such a course of Lectures, I flatter myself, will prove of infinite utility, by keeping the heads and limbs of many retired gentlemen in as active motion as when they were posting from the Bank to the 'Change, from the 'Change to the Custom-house, and from the Custom-house to the Excise-office; and perhaps afford as much amusement to ladies and gentlemen of distinction and curiosity, as the convulsions of live frogs, or the gaping of a dead calf's head*.

* With which the publick was, about this time, very much edified, by the professors of Galvanism.

THE PROJECTOR. N° 19.

"A great perturbation in nature, to receive at once the benefit of sleep, and do the effects of watching."

PHYSICIAN IN MACBETH.

June 1803.

"TO THE AUTHOR OF THE PROJECTOR.

"MR. PROJECTOR, *May* 16.

"THROUGH the long and well-conducted course of your monthly lucubrations, I have expected, but in vain, that you would, like your illustrious predecessors, not only wake, but sleep for the benefit of the publick. They, when they had exhausted all their old, and were in want of fresh matter to entertain their readers, had only to fall into a slumber, when straight their good genius, by one touch of his magic wand, conveyed them to distant regions, made times long gone pass by in review before them, or anticipated future ages; when lo! at a second stroke, the 'baseless fabric of the vision' vanished, and they found themselves quietly seated in their arm-chair,

ready to communicate to the publick the scenes which had just passed before them.

"Now, Sir, I cannot but think that you, as belonging to the harmless tribe of Projectors, have a peculiar right to wander occasionally in 'the pleasing land of drowsy-head;' for what are more frequently termed dreams and visions, than the Utopian schemes and air-built castles of the Projector?

"If the '*Tatler*' so far belied its name as frequently to sink to repose; if the '*Spectator*' often closed his eyes; if the '*Guardian*' was sometimes caught napping; and, in short, Mr. Projector, if all your classical ancestors, if I may so express myself, have one time or another resigned themselves to the dominion of Queen Mab; nay, if sometimes (Oh, monstrous!) a whole '*World*' has lain in a state of inactivity, how much more reason have we to expect that we may be indulged with the visionary prospects of a 'Projector!'

"Do then, dear Sir, fall asleep as fast as you can, and be sure to talk in your sleep, and you will oblige a great many of your gentle readers; but none more than yours, Mr. Projector, sleeping or waking,

"SIMON SOMNUS."

My Correspondent's Letter affords another instance, in addition to the many which occur in these days, of artful compliments and concealed censures. Perhaps, however (for I wish to put the most favourable construction on the address of a stranger), he really means to compliment me, by supposing that I am capable of that which has added no little celebrity to the pages of my predecessors; and perhaps he may really think that I am flattered by this: but he has to learn that no words of adulation can compensate for the insinuations he has thrown out against PROJECTORS. When he calls PROJECTORS "a harmless tribe," he bestows an epithet which no Philosopher (unless he happen to be a Christian, which is not always the case) can bear with any degree of patience; an epithet repugnant to the high spirit of modern speculators, and which no man will tolerate whose life is employed in laying plans for the good of the publick. Surely he must know little of the history of Projects and Projectors for the last ten or twelve years only, who would think he did them justice by calling them "a harmless tribe," or by supposing that when men spring from the calm duties of private life, to the heights of religious or political theory

and speculation, they always deserve to be considered as harmless.

It is my duty, therefore, to inform this Correspondent, that *harmless* is an unfortunate word, when applied to the human character; it is what no gentleman will put up with, and indeed, I am afraid, very few ladies; certainly none of those who are most conspicuous in the records of high and gay life. Let my Correspondent survey the most distinguished characters in the fashionable world, and consider how many of them would think it an honour, or rather would not think it a disgrace, to be handed down to posterity as a "harmless tribe." Let him look at the tomb-stones which have very nearly exhausted the language of panegyrick, and see if he can find such a word as *harmless.* Let him consult the language of modern times, and modern societies, and ask whether *harmless* is not by general consent deemed synonymous with *sneaking*, *poor-spirited*, and other epithets applied to those obscure beings "whom nobody knows."

Having thus endeavoured to set my Correspondent right in a matter which he will find of great importance, if he has any connexion with the living world; I might proceed to resent what he has advanced respecting the

"visions, Utopian schemes, and air-built castles, of the Projectors;" but it will be more charitable in me to pass at once to the request he has made, that I should "fall asleep as fast as I can." This requires much consideration, and I shall be happy if by any means I can draw the attention of my readers to the subject. Sleep is a phænomenon which philosophers have not yet explained in a very satisfactory manner. If we attend to common language, we ought to believe that mankind are always asleep, and that when they neglect any necessary precaution, or omit any necessary duty, it is "because they never dreamt of it." At this rate, what with the French death, which is an eternal sleep, and an English life, which is no better, how few are there who pass their time awake, and with their eyes open! But I trust we shall not admit this compromise between the dormant philosophy of the two nations, which, in fact, would make the whole of existence a passage between one doze and another. It is more for our purpose, as PROJECTORS, to persuade our readers that, however long they may choose to continue their nap, and whatever dreams they may enjoy the meanwhile, they must one day or other rouse themselves, examine how long they have slept, and

what they have to do now they are restored to activity.

Of the sleep of life, some undoubtedly enjoy too much: they never seem wide awake; and we know they are alive only by certain motions, twitchings, and convulsions, in which they are neither wholly active nor passive. Such, I take it, are the men of mere pleasure. Their dreams are probably very pleasant, as they complain bitterly if awakened; and, in general, it is found extremely difficult to rouse them, while a single illusion, or, as some call it, delusion, remains to lock up their senses. But it is necessary for such to know, that the longest sleep must have an end, that sleep protracted beyond a certain time cannot be called rest, nor administers any of its strengthening comforts: and that, during this tedious insensibility, all that is worth seeing in life passes unobserved, and the man awakes with a disturbed recollection of a variety of confused and inconsistent visions, which leave no regular impression on the mind, and even by the best memories cannot be narrated without visible dissatisfaction, and a very painful sense of shame.

From this sketch of one description of sleepers, it will appear, what is really the

case, that there is a sleep of the mind as well as of the body, and that we have no reason to think men are awake merely because they may be parading the streets either on foot or in carriages. I have known many men fast asleep while on a full gallop; and others employed with the utmost apparent activity of body and limbs, who nevertheless were so oppressed with sleep as not to be conscious of what was passing, nor to perceive the multitudes that were gazing with wonder on a man performing that with his eyes open, which was never conceived to be practicable but in the wildest dreams. I have at this moment a young gentleman in my eye, who lately succeeded to a large estate; scarcely was his father laid in the grave, when he began to yawn and gape, and could not keep his eyes open for an hour together; it is thought that some injudicious friend has given him soporifics instead of cordials; but whether this be the case, it is certain he is now in his first sleep; and I know by sure symptoms, that although many imagine he is awake and lively, he will soon be convinced of the contrary, and will one morning, when he opens his eyes, be astonished to find he has been conveyed, bed and all, to a very large building in St. George's Fields. My readers may easily conceive how

he will stare, when he looks round, and finds himself in a room so disproportioned to his elegant apartments in Westminster; and especially when he endeavours to recollect by what means such a change could have been effected, and who the enchanters were that could, without his knowledge, remove him to a place which, however horrid, he has no means of quitting.

Cases of this kind are so common, indeed, that I shall perhaps be blamed for introducing what has so little the appearance of invention, and what is so consistent with the common theory of sleep. But it is yet necessary to repeat, that, however common, the practice of walking in one's sleep is one of the most dangerous. This, I flatter myself, cannot be too often repeated. "*Quædam*," says Seneca, "*sunt repetenda, quædam inculcanda.*" And if the little that has now been advanced should prevail on one person only to guard his eyelids, the PROJECTOR will not have written in vain.

I hope I shall be excused, if I add, that many of the fair sex appear lately to have lain in a dormant state; and that much of what they account pleasure is but a confused dream, which they cannot repeat so as to give it the

appearance of what is rational and consistent. Nothing, for example, seems so unlike the motionless state of sleep as dancing; and yet even in that amusement, if my information be not incorrect, several have been caught napping, and those liberties and advantages have been taken with them, which we may be certain they never would have permitted had they been awake. Pleasant dreams, we are told, imply bodily health; but this is not the case with the sleep of the mind. The more pleasant the dreams then, the more unpleasant the awakening; and the more obvious is it that the mind is in a weak and disordered state. Without being fastidious in such matters, I hope I may be permitted to doubt, whether those tumultuous routs, at which five or six hundred persons assemble to pass the time in confusion, without social comforts, and even with frequent alarms, are not a species of dreams the effect of some soporific administered by the Pandora of fashion. The same remark may be extended with more certainty to those Dormitories called masquerades; but it is some consolation that they are now seldom frequented by persons who are awake to their character, but by a class with whom waking and sleeping are synonymous, who are observed

to drop from one paroxysm of lethargy into another without any visible change, and who are known to be dead only by the length of the fit.

I hope I may be permitted to add, that there are times when a greater degree of sleep may be allowable than would be proper or consistent at others. During peace, for example, a greater number of persons may take this indulgence, and the consequences be confined to themselves; but, under the circumstances in which the nation is at present placed, I trust it will appear that the utmost vigilance is necessary, and that men of all ranks will be convinced that vigilance and sleep are incompatible. It may, indeed, be said that our enemy is now indulging certain dreams, which he wishes to realize in this country; and that all we have to do is to awaken him, or bring him to his senses. Undoubtedly the latter would be very desirable, if it were known where his senses reside; but in either case we may be certain that we cannot rouse another, and remain inactive ourselves. It would therefore be expedient for a time to suspend those long naps to which I have alluded in this paper, and to guard ourselves as men who have all their senses about them. It will be very difficult to combine such

"visions of the night," as the newspapers detail every day, with those exertions and those sacrifices which, our rulers inform us, must now be made for the preservation of the only blessings which render life desirable. But, as Projects of this kind are not strictly within my province, I shall expatiate no farther on a subject which will, no doubt, be handled with so much more advantage in other quarters. I do not, however, trespass by requiring that those who persist in their sleep shall at least cease from the too common practice "of telling their dreams," in order that others who have more important business to transact may not be disturbed by such reveries. The time is come, when our dreamers should either be silent, or ashamed.

To revert to the subject of my Correspondent's Letter, I hope he will agree with me, that we cannot dream to much advantage at times when we are liable to have our rest disturbed; yet as the season is now come when the PROJECTOR will retire to his country lodgings, to meditate schemes for the good of the publick, it is not impossible he may find, amidst the solitudes of Hornsey, a quiet night to comply with his Correspondent's request. I cannot say, however, that the multitude of

precedents to which my Correspondent alludes have an encouraging effect; they rather deter me from undertaking what has been executed so well as to bid defiance to rivalship; and if I find that the dream does not come kindly, I shall certainly be careful how I meddle with it. A PROJECTOR is by trade a man of originality and pure invention; and I must take care, in obliging my Correspondent, lest I be caught in the very fact of *stealing a nap* from my predecessors.

THE PROJECTOR. N° 20.

"Cœlum, non animum mutant." HOR.

Thus some retire to nourish hapless woe;
Some seeking happiness not found below;
Some to comply with humour, and a mind
To social scenes by nature disinclin'd;
Some sway'd by fashion, some by deep disgust;
Some self-impov'rish'd, and because they must;
But few that court RETIREMENT are aware
Of half the toils they must encounter there.

COWPER.

July 1803.

SINCE my last paper I have been favoured by the correspondence of several well-wishers to

their country, who, without severely censuring my usual pursuits, seem of opinion that I should bring my paper to a war establishment; or, in other words, that I should employ my projecting talents on some scheme which may baffle the attempts of the enemy. I have been reminded, that the genius of Projection should be principally employed on great occasions; and that, if I have any hopes of immortal fame, now is the time to put in my claim, and rescue myself and my brother Projectors from the suspicion they lie under of being more whimsical than useful. I am told that we ought not now to be considering of "ladies routs," and "Sunday dinners," when our foes are contriving the extirpation of the English name, and the destruction of English wealth and consequence. But, true as these things may be, I question whether my correspondents have not addressed their exhortations to the wrong person. Much as I wish, in the capacity of an individual, to promote the welfare of the nation at the present crisis, I am not one of those Projectors whose talents lie in raising armies, or constructing batteries; and yet, while I go on opposing the general enemies of mankind, I trust I demonstrate a true Antigallican spirit.

I shall therefore proceed, in the course of

my regular lucubrations, to take some notice of another class of correspondents, who have been attracted by the Project I announced in my XVIIIth paper. From their letters I find that "A course of Lectures on the Art of Retirement" is a much more popular scheme than I at first imagined. It was very little expected by me, that a design which seems better fitted to the piping times of peace, should have drawn attention amidst the din of war, and the alarm of invasion. Besides the offers of very liberal subscriptions for this course of Lectures, several of the Livery Companies have generously tendered the use of their Halls; and others declare that, in case I think the press a better medium, they are ready to indemnify me for all expences of paper and print. One correspondent only opposes the scheme, and his sentiments form a striking contrast to the others. He allows that many die miserably in retirement; but adds, "What of that? Are people to live always, and we their heirs to be for ever kept out of their fortunes?"

Disregarding this sneer, I think it more respectful to attend to the majority of my correspondents by adverting to the subject; but first premising that, owing to an invincible modesty, which I presume is a peculiar cha-

racteristic of Projectors, I must decline the office of a public lecturer on this occasion, and confine what I have to say to the present vehicle of my Lucubrations, which, if it be read as I have read it for many years, will be found very useful in all desperate cases of retirement, and will administer much of that amusement which is oftener sought than found in our village solitudes and secluded boxes.

Retirement at a certain period of life appears to have been a practice of high antiquity, but became, like other practices, modified and changed by the changes in customs and manners. I have no doubt that the early retirers were men who took a hint from monastic institutions, and, when they had enjoyed as much of the world as they thought a reasonable share, determined to devote the remainder of their days to religious meditation. When these institutions were swept away, the purposes of retirement by laymen were not altogether forgotten, but in the course of two centuries they became very much changed; and in our time it is extremely difficult to say what retirement means, and how many active pursuits are included in a word which originally implied the cessation of labour.

The neglect of *etymology* is a great misfortune in our days, and has covered our moral system with clouds and darkness. We retain, indeed, good old words, but allow every one to fix what meaning he finds most convenient for his own purposes. Of this many instances might be given, as of one gentleman who discovers that he is fined five or ten thousand pounds in a court of justice for adultery, when he meant nothing more than an affair of gallantry; and of another, who is sent to jail for cheating his employers, when, in his conscience, he believed he was only providing for his family. In like manner, we find that murder, gaming, spirit, fashion, and other words, have so totally lost their meaning, as to be quite unintelligible in genteel life; or have gained so many different meanings, as to be intelligible in no other kind of life. It will be in vain to improve Dr. Johnson's Dictionary without attending to these things; nor, until we become more learned in etymology, shall we ever know the root of many of those evils of which we complain.

Retirement has shared the fate of a multitude of other well-known words. Few consider what it is, or regard it in any other light than a removal for a certain number of miles

from the metropolis, or the occupation of a house "eligibly situated in the midst of a fine sporting country, with an extensive walled garden, rich in every production of the vegetable kind, and beautifully irrigated by the adjoining river, with lawn, paddock, kitchen garden, coach-house, stables, detached from the mansion, which commands extensive prospects of the neighbouring country." The possession of this domain is usually called retirement; but in a few weeks the owner discovers that something is wanting, which the auctioneer, in the plenitude of his eloquence, forgot to mention, and that is, a *qualification for retirement*, independent of the *title* which is usually written and engrossed on parchment.

This is a grievous, but a common mistake; yet it might be removed, if gentlemen quitting business would consider that retirement is literally a going out of the world, or, in other words, a departure from this life into another, for which, preparation is absolutely necessary. The common supposition is, that retirement rids a man of all his enemies, of all the cares, vexations, and anxieties of business, with its endless train of losses, disappointments, bad debts, spoiled cargoes, accommodation bills, and bankruptcies. And in some respect this is

the case; yet his situation is not much changed for the better, if, in getting rid of one species of enemies, he finds he has to encounter another, with whom he has no power to grapple, either by himself or his attorney; enemies which he can neither frighten by a summons, nor destroy by a prosecution, and whom he knows not how to conciliate or to conquer, because he has never before known that such existed. These enemies, it is almost needless to say, are hours and days, months and years, for which no employment can be found, and for which the hasty retirer thought no employment necessary. They attack him, therefore, in his most unprepared state, often when he has not a friend to assist him; and he now discovers, what he never thought possible, that there are some things which money cannot do, and that the enjoyment of a few hours is an enterprize which credit and capital cannot achieve.

Imagination might perhaps do much to relieve the sufferer; but imagination is not very active in advanced age. If he could suppose himself still in business, that his garden is a vast shop, that the trees are his books, and the herbs his commodities, he might still carve his barks into bills of lading and invoice, and

weigh out imaginary sugars to ideal customers. He might occasionally take stock among his strawberries and cherries, or calculate the drawback on cucumbers exported as presents. He might maintain civil actions, and imagine his caterpillars barristers and his ear-wigs judges; or, if civic honours had ever decked his brow, he might address his pigs and poultry in common-hall assembled, and lament over the grievances of his geese in consequence of Michaelmas assessments. But these are stretches of imagination, which, if possible, would not be permanent, and are little to be expected from those who have studied all their lives to be "matter-of-fact men."

A few indeed, of retired gentlemen I have had the honour of being acquainted with, who, with the aid of an imagination somewhat lively, have realized much of their past life in their present. My old friend CONSOLS, who quitted the bustling scenes of Capel-court, in his sixty-third year, for a sequestered spot in Herefordshire, kept up the remembrance of his, more happy days in such a way as to alleviate the sorrows of solitude in a very considerable degree. This he effected by retaining the language of the Stock Exchange in his orchard and his dairy. When he sent goods to market,

or bought any there, he was a *bear* or a *bull* on that article. The weather, he would sometimes observe, was five *per cent.* warmer than yesterday; and he often wondered how the profits of his farm *fell* so prodigiously without the aid of the Hamburgh Gazette. When, after an extraordinary dose of cider, he felt its usual effect, he would say that "things were low in the morning;" but, after a comfortable sip of the parson's punch, "they recovered towards evening." A remarkably numerous litter of pigs he called "the new stuff;" and when any of his ducks became lame, he said it put him in mind of poor Jack such-a-one, who waddled out in the American war. Yet he often lamented, amidst these reminiscences, that he could do nothing "for time;" that he had no "differences" to settle but what arose between his hay-makers; and could "hold no tickets" but those delivered by the man at the turnpike. And sometimes, he was inclined to moral reflection, and would remark that a "settling day" must come, when, it was to be feared, the best of our funds would be at "a discount."

On retirement in general, it may be observed, that whatever was the case in former times, when every class of mankind fixed on

some period of abstraction from the cares of active life, the practice is now entirely confined to men in trade. We find in no other calling any disposition to quit the premises while they are at all tenable. The clergyman, the lawyer, and the physician, continue their several professions, while their faculties are capable of the duties belonging to them, and in some cases a little longer. Statesmen and politicians are equally tenacious of their employments; while the soldier, or sailor, disdains to quit his rank, unless extreme old age, or mutilation, render his services unacceptable. The trader only is ambitious of the hour that shall convey him to what he supposes to be ease, relaxation, and pleasure; a new life, which is to be accompanied with new health, and the enjoyment of the pure and simple delights of rural repose. Why he is so often disappointed has already been hinted at, and may be familiarly illustrated to him, by reminding him that no man in this world can quit one business without engaging in another. TIME is a personage who will not be easy unless he is employed; and those who have, for forty or fifty years, been used to employ him in one way, cannot very readily find out another. There is a certain period of life, when

it is more easy to improve than to learn. It frequently happens that he who leaves a shop for a farm, passes from knowledge to ignorance, and from profit to loss. Even those who have determined to devote the days of their retirement to the pleasures of the country, will find that these require a previous education, and an early habit.

One remedy, and only one, seems necessary to prevent the many disappointments of Retirers; and this is, that they should form a large society in their own houses, composed of those gentlemen that are usually to be met with in the shops of the London booksellers, and who may be conveyed to the country at a very small expence. They are so very numerous, that every Retirer may choose his set, and have as many of them, in his room, in an evening, as are to be found in our most crowded routs. If he is a stickler for fashion, he may have them as elegantly dressed as any courtiers. The oldest, I confess, I think are in general the best; but he may have them of any age, and will find in them companions whose conversation can never fail. In bad weather, and, what is particularly dreadful to many retirers, a wet day, they have the happiest knack at dispelling gloom, and furnish-

ing materials for conversation and reflection. Not that they are flatterers or toad-eaters: if well-chosen, they are more sincere than any description of friends whatever, and will tell the proudest man to his face not only what they think of him, but a great many things which he wonders how they came to know. And they have this quality peculiar to them, that if the Retirer chooses to be offended (for they sometimes may bear hard upon him), and rejects them with contempt, if he renews his acquaintance, he will find them inflexible in their opinions, and, upon a closer intimacy, will be obliged to allow that they have the best of the argument. But what ought, above all considerations, to recommend them to the Retirer is, that they possess an endless variety of entertainment. Some of them are very sound and able Divines, and upon that account are the fittest companions for gentlemen who are desirous to leave the cares of the world behind them. Others are very well acquainted with History, and may inform the Retirer of many curious particulars of the country in which he has lived, and some things relating to the very town in which his shop lay, which he did not know before. Some, particularly the elderly gentlemen, are very excellent

Poets; and others can divert the hours with short essays, anecdotes, and the lighter kinds of entertainment. And all this enjoyment of the best society in the world may be acquired without any danger to the constitution, or the indulgence of any intemperate pleasures. But it is necessary to add, that some small acquaintance must be formed with the gentlemen I have been speaking of in early life. They never seem pleasing to those who have neglected to cultivate their friendship, until they have no relish for any thing but the bottle or the card-table, pleasures of which the companions I recommend cannot partake. With all, therefore, who are inclined to make Retirement agreeable or profitable, I must make it a condition that they begin early to pay their respects, at least occasionally, to these friends. Their origin may be low; they are indeed created out of rags, and their fathers have sometimes had nothing but rags to cover them; but the fame they have acquired is the greatest proof of their merit; and there are thousands of the best and wisest men in these kingdoms who are ready to acknowledge that to them they owe wisdom, virtue, and happiness. I do not affirm, indeed, that there are not bad ones among them; but any judicious acquaint-

ance can point these out; and some lately have become very foppish, sending to Russia, Turkey, and Morocco, for their dress, and wearing a profusion of gold; but still those who look farther than the outside, will meet with agreeable information, good sense, and much various amusement, to make retirement comfortable.

THE PROJECTOR. No 21.

"Calamitas virtutis occasio est." SENECA.

August 1803.

IT was the observation of an old friend, who once recovered from a dangerous illness, that he was often encouraged to suffer his pains with submission, and always to recollect them with pleasure, in consequence of the many kindnesses he experienced on that occasion, and the many anxious inquiries which were made by persons with whom he could not boast of much intimacy. I experienced a similar

pleasure, when, in taking a long walk a few evenings since, I contemplated the vast number of my fellow subjects who were submitting to all the fatigues and inconvenience of the Military Drill, that they might speedily be qualified to give their aid and support to Old England at the present alarming crisis. If calamity, as the author of my motto says, be "Virtue's opportunity," if danger or distress be the season when friendship is most acceptable and most sincere, one is almost induced to thank the occasion that has produced such testimonies of patriotism as cannot be suspected, and perhaps never were paralleled. We are, indeed, in circumstances for which history affords no adequate precedent; and what, therefore, can be more cheering than the reflection, that extraordinary emergencies have not called in vain for extraordinary exertions?

If we contemplate these matters in a less serious light, we might say that even the gay and fashionable world, for whose interest the Projector has long laboured, ought not to be unthankful for an occasion which is likely to afford them the means of destroying their old and natural enemy, Time, in a manner that may be amusing to themselves, and beneficial to their country. How opportunely are they

called upon to join the drill and parade, at the very moment when routs and assemblies, operas and breakfasts, become suspended by the regular course of fashion, and the session of gaiety is over; and when nothing remains to divert the tediousness of life, but rural retirement, which is too frequently found to increase the disease, and to turn exertions into fidgets. Happily, therefore, for such, the remainder of the year promises an anxious scene of bustle, and a continued series of operations which will leave no hour without its due share of employment. I appeal to the lovers of amusement, whether a review of three or four hours will not yield more variety, and make a greater noise, than a rout of the same duration; whether the epaulet, the gorget, and the sash, will not be more becoming than the dress of dominos, harlequins, and Tiddy Dolls; and whether even an ordinary field-day will not be more exhilarating than a public breakfast. The ladies too will, I hope, readily come into this opinion; and if they, instead of informing their male friends that they are *at home* once or twice in a season, will send each a card with the words "The country is in danger," I trust they will raise *companies* as numerous as in winter (although the *files* may

be more *open)*, and whose names will hereafter make a much more distinguished figure in the London Gazette, than in the porter's list, or in the columns of a newspaper. Our dames of high rank and spirit cannot, I farther trust, be ignorant that they will derive more honour from rousing the valour of their beaux in the service of the nation, than they have ever yet reaped from the unvaried repetition of compliments, ringing the same changes upon "coloured lamps, early cherries, chalked floors," or staircases fantastically ornamented with the borrowed productions of Covent-garden market. For surely, setting aside all consideration of an invasion, what are the honours worth, which we must share with gardeners and lamplighters?

In my humble capacity of Projector, I have been seriously thinking of a plan to embody the irresistible powers of the fair-sex on the present occasion, and to form them either into an army of reserve, or raise their fascinations *en masse*. But although I have consulted many ladies of spirit and courage, and who have distinguished their prowess in lesser engagements, incident to domestic warfare, I have not yet been able to contrive any scheme by which they may be brought to bear against

the common enemy. The history of the Amazons is very interesting, and very romantic; but the majority, in these days of scepticism, deem it fabulous, and wonder we should believe that there ever was a nation of women who fought without husbands. Yet not many years are elapsed since there was some appearance of the revival of Amazonian courage, when the ladies not only practised, but were said to excel in the genteel exercise of archery; and at this day I am told that certain high-born dames and damsels make so distinguished a figure in hunting, as to be in at the death, when half of the sportsmen have been distanced or unhorsed. These circumstances look somewhat promising; they are grounds for speculation, and at least shew that my meditations on the subject have not been wholly visionary. I have also to add, that, if the modes of education pointed out some years ago by certain politicians in petticoats, and philosophers in muslins, had not been suffered to fall into contempt, his Majesty's forces might perhaps at this moment have been recruited promiscuously from both sexes. My readers will probably recollect, that the scheme of these literary Amazons was to educate girls in all the sports, amusements, exercises, &c. of boys. Two

consequences, it was fondly hoped, must have followed from this: either that the fair sex would have acquired that superiority over the other, which these she-philosophers contended was highly practicable; or, they might have been so equal to the males in all hardihood both of body and mind, that the difference would not have been perceptible unless by very curious inquirers. In either case, had not "the pride and tyranny of the fancied lords of the creation" prevented it, we should now have been contemplating the beauty as well as the bravery of our regiments; and our Gazettes would have been filled with the promotion of many a Colonel Jenny and Captain Polly.

But prejudices, inimical to all great reforms, put a stop to this also; and among other, no doubt equally foolish, objections, one was, that regiments of different sexes could not be formed into battalions without danger of the service being neglected; that we should have more field-nights than field-days; that intriguing would take place, instead of exercising; and that no manœuvre would be practised with skill, except the general salute. I did not, however, see much in this objection; for, if our female soldiers had been regularly trained upon the plan of the philosophers above alluded

to, there would have been so little of the woman left, that the males would as soon have thought of paying court to a piquet of French *poissardes*, or a company of St. Giles's rangers. Their preference of concubinage to matrimony was certainly somewhat in favour of the objection; and there was another obstacle not very easily surmounted, I mean, an uncommon antipathy to that negative manœuvre which the commanding officer enjoins, when he calls *Attention! Order!* Indeed, with all my partiality to the scheme, there is some reason to fear that too many of the privates would have been desirous of giving "the word of command."

But whatever advantages might have resulted from that and other schemes for the improvement of the fair sex, proposed about the same time, as they were not adopted, and are now forgotten, it is useless to regret, and too late to revive them. Still such are the irresistible powers of the ladies in civil life, that every Projector, at this crisis, ought to be meditating some plan to call them forth. My own ideas, I confess, are not sufficiently matured on the subject, to permit me to give a decided opinion; but, from the great numbers of the sex who have for some weeks been

seen marching towards the coasts of Kent and Sussex, with supplies for two or three months, one is inclined to suppose that some secret expedition is in agitation, or that they are eager to bid defiance to the enemy on the very shores where it is most probable he will attempt to land. This, if it be a true statement of the case, does honour to their valour; for they are, I am told, subject to many privations, the greater part having left their husbands at home; while their encampments are not the most convenient, nor well furnished with provisions, unless at very great expence.

But to return to the favourable opportunity which the present crisis gives for the employment of time. A learned author observes that, with a certain class, Time is either very long, or very tedious. Means enough have been invented to abridge it of its length, but the *tædium* of the remaining part would be in general provided for with great difficulty, if emergencies such as the present did not now-and-then arise. What, for example, would become of conversation at this dead season of the year, when the Parliament is about to close, and London to become desolate, if the probabilities of an invasion did not come so opportunely, and at the same time so admirably

fitted for discussion, that no two persons can be found of the same opinion, even of that small number who happen to have any opinion at all? Long experience proves that the less we know of any subject, the more we talk about it; and perhaps, nothing was ever better contrived for the purposes of conjecture, than a case of alarm. It is on this occasion that we think in the dark; and our ideas, playing at blind-man's-buff, are never right but by accident.

On the present occasion, likewise, I cannot but felicitate the readers of Novels on the opportunity they will now have, of exerting that courage which they have derived from a familiarity with terrific objects. For some years past, all our Novels have turned on one passion, that of fear, which has been excited sometimes ingeniously and sometimes clumsily, by means of *ruinated* castles, blue chambers, and long galleries, deep dungeons, feeble glimmerings, strange noises, grimly ghosts, and half-picked skeletons. At first these created no small alarm, and every boarding-school proclaimed the "reign of terror." Few misses were so hardy as to go to bed without a servant, or to walk in the dark without fancying that the old clock-case was a murdered spirit.

A new series of nervous affections were consequently introduced, which puzzled the faculty very much, until they discovered how ineffectual bark and steel, and the whole class of tonics, were in the vicinity of a circulating library. At length, however, castles and ghosts, and blue chambers, and blue devils, became so common, that it required a very unusual mixture of raw-heads and bloody-bones to excite a moment's apprehension in the most delicate young lady. Light at the end of a gallery had no more effect than farthing candles ought to have; and the most timid looked behind the tapestry, indifferent whether it concealed a gang of banditti or a set of china. Murders and rapes were perused with great composure, and towers toppled on their heads without disturbing a single hair of the Ninon or the Brutus. Vast forests were perambulated by night like the Mall at noon-day, and travellers lost their way without caring whether they ever found it.

Those therefore who studied courage in such edifying performances, may have an opportunity to practise it, since they may be assured that the enemy will have no hesitation in performing the incidents they have familiarised by reading. The threatening foe has, indeed,

perpetrated them so frequently in other countries, that perhaps at no very distant period much of the history of the late war will be read as romance, and the circumstance of a GREAT HERO murdering his prisoners in cool blood, and poisoning his own troops because they were sick, will be thought the daring invention of our celebrated castle-builder Mrs. Ratcliffe, or of the ghost-master-general, Mr. Lewis.

I have been led into these desultory remarks, partly by the incident mentioned in the beginning of my paper, but chiefly with a view to contribute my share of contempt for those principles and practices, that folly and dissipation, which more or less have been aiding the present disorganized state of Europe. Very recent experience has demonstrated that we have yet a party, although small, and I trust, impotent, who still persist in circulating opinions subversive of the order of society, and calculated to produce what they have already produced in other quarters, national slavery and humiliation, and individual poverty and misery. With such men it is impossible to argue, and it would be folly to temporize. If we did not know how "desperately wicked" the human

heart may be, to what could we refer such conduct, unless to lunacy or fatuity?

With their utmost industry, however, they have not been able to darken the present prospect. Indirectly perhaps we are indebted to them; since they have contributed to quicken the exertions and rouse the spirit of their indignant fellow subjects. And such, indeed, has been the consequence of the menaces of the enemy and the artifices of his agents, that in a very short time the nation will be placed out of the reach of all probable danger. Among others who have contributed to this just and necessary cause, in a very considerable degree, are the Clergy. It is with great pleasure I now frequently hear discourses from the pulpit, expressly adapted to the circumstances of the nation, and pointing how the passing events are to be considered in a religious view. This is highly seasonable. The present is not the time when public licentiousness ought to prevail without resistance. It is impossible to read, unconcerned, the heterogeneous intelligence which some of our newspapers afford—a short paragraph respecting the danger of the nation, and a lengthened column of insipid trash relating to a dance, or a rout. This

frivolous spirit, we trust, is not English; and it is, therefore, peculiarly becoming in the teachers of sacred truth, to direct the public attention to objects of higher importance, and to those resources in a time of danger, which are beyond all human power or contrivance.

The eventful history of the last ten years is an awful lesson to all nations. And now we are again, and perhaps more closely than ever, to contend with a nation which has hitherto been a scourge in the hand of God—a nation bent on no melioration of the condition of society among any people—a nation once dyed in the blood of its king, its nobles and citizens, under the pretext of regaining liberty, and now so bigoted to slavery as to be determined to spread it and its accompanying miseries over the habitable globe. This is evidently not the work of man, as man. It is irreconcileable with the lowest wisdom, and would be resisted by the shallowest understanding. The enemy are blind agents in the hands of a superintending Providence, who acts for wise, although to us, mysterious purposes. Happy will it be if, by imploring the Divine aid, and exhibiting a thorough reformation, we should become the highly favoured people appointed to check the career of mad ambition, to restore peace to the

distracted nations of Europe, and to bid the sword return into its sheath. When we recollect our many past deliverances, we may humbly hope that one greater than all may yet be in reserve; and if we truly and unfeignedly prize the religious and civil privileges which for so many years we have enjoyed, amidst storms and tempests, we cannot fail at the same time to recollect the terms on which they were granted, and the correspondent duties we owe to the "Giver of every good and perfect gift."

THE PROJECTOR. N° 22.

"Conciliat animos hominum COMITAS, affabilitasque sermonis." Cic. de Off. II. 14.

September 1803.

IN the course of a short walk with a friend lately, I accompanied him into a shop, where he made several purchases of articles which I thought were somewhat dear; but I observed

that he laid down his money without hesitation; and, whatever attention he bestowed on the goods, he offered no kind of objection to the price, nor indulged himself in that species of luxurious wisdom which we call higgling. "You seem surprized, Mr. PROJECTOR," said he, on leaving the shop, "to see me so apparently negligent: you have, perhaps, hitherto considered me as a careful man in my bargains; and I believe I am so upon the whole; yet that shopkeeper contrives to rid me of all my chaffering propensities and precautions, and always gets from me whatever he is pleased to ask: with another I might probably be more circumspect, but this man disarms me. You are to know, I went into his shop, about a year since, to purchase a very trifling article, so trifling that I am ashamed to mention it, yet he served me with a civility, an humble respect, and a desire to please, which he could not have exceeded had I laid out an hundred pounds. By this he fairly caught me. I now think it a crime to go any where else for the same description of goods—they are, perhaps, not better than I might find in shops more convenient for me; but his civil manners are irresistible. We are now somewhat more intimate; yet you perceive his familiarity goes no farther than to accept

whatever kind of weather I am pleased to bring, and to take in good part my opinion of the invasion. I have recommended him to many more valuable customers, who are not only content, but have thanked me. And all this, Mr. PROJECTOR, comes of CIVILITY."

Having experienced something like this in my own small and confined intercourse with the gentlemen behind the counter, I could not refuse my assent to what my friend advanced, and made every allowance for his unsuspecting manner of dealing, in consideration of the pleasure which it afforded him—and I promised at the same time, in consequence of a hint from him, to take this matter into more serious discussion, for the purpose of proving that, if honesty be the best policy, CIVILITY is the next best.

As that CIVILITY which I have, therefore, adopted for the subject of this PROJECTOR, must be well understood by all my readers (for all my readers must have once at least in their lives* been in a shop), I shall not attempt any definition of it. A worthy predecessor of mine seems to rank Civility with Good-breeding; but

* A Lady, who is sometimes permitted to look at my MS. requested I would change this to "once a day."

I am humbly of opinion, that civility is rather a branch or a species of good-breeding, and that *politeness* is a superior qualification to both; or, what may be thought to amount to the same thing, a qualification for superior places. A man may be polite in a court, or an assembly; but to say he had been *civil* in such places would have implied that he had served the company with liquors, or had called their servants and carriages, or performed any other menial work with a porter-like attention.

Instead, therefore, of encumbering the subject by farther distinctions, I flatter myself I may be permitted to say, without risk of contradiction, that, in a commercial country like ours, in "a nation of shopkeepers" (as our polite neighbours the French are pleased to call us), CIVILITY possesses charms superior either to good-breeding or to politeness, because it is an article of greater necessity and of wider extent. It is in demand in all seasons, at all hours, and on every occasion, and therefore must be kept in readiness to be produced at the shortest possible warning. It partakes of the genius of an *extempore;* and civil men are a species of *Improvisatori.* They are expected to return a civil answer to a question of any kind whatever; whereas your well-bred and

polite people claim a time to reflect, and plead the privilege of passion, with all the lesser prerogatives of huffing, pouting, looking grave, and taking miff. They are, therefore, not obliged to return an answer unless they like the question, or unless it come within certain prescribed rules of etiquette. Hence I account the civil man the greater hero; he stands firm whatever rudeness he may meet with. He "smiles in the whirlwind" of impertinence, and "enjoys the storm" of fashionable shopping. But the polite man, on the contrary, without any impeachment of his courage, may turn on his heel, and take a whole night to consider whether there are not "throats to be cut."

That CIVILITY possesses an irresistible charm, may be proved by an appeal to general feeling and experience; and, when we reflect that it is chiefly employed in the transfer of money, we must allow it a very singular degree of merit. But, when we view it in this light, we are at the same time surprized at the infatuation of those who despise it, and who are yet dependent on public favour for their success in trade, and dependent on strangers and casual visitors, whom they cannot by any other means conciliate or secure. When we see a shopkeeper (a class of men peculiarly

interested in this subject) who, instead of treating his customers with civility, practises an air of rudeness, is harsh, unaccommodating, and repulsive, and compels them to declare that they will never return to his shop, we are surely tempted to exclaim, why is this man unacquainted with the charms of civility? or why is he alone ignorant of that which all the world knows, and insensible to a mode of pleasing which all the world feels so forcibly? That there are such men, I presume, some of my readers must have experienced; but it is impossible to account for their conduct, because in commercial life, it is impossible to account for the conduct of a man who not only neglects, but obstructs the interest he is placed there to promote, which it is a duty he owes to himself and his family to promote, and which he may promote and enlarge to competence or opulence, by the simplest means, consistent with the strictest integrity. If, however, this arises from a natural defect in the understanding, or if there are some men in whom rudeness is an attribute of the mind, which they are more willing to improve than eradicate, it is entreated that they will not consider any thing here advanced as a personal reflection. We have only to lament that they are

not placed in situations where rudeness may be useful; and when they have it in their power to rise, they ought to be very thankful that there are situations in this great metropolis, in which professional incivility and official coarseness are not detrimental to promotion.

It is usually said, that CIVILITY costs nothing; by which, I presume, it is meant that every man may be civil if he pleases. I shall not controvert the point at present, but on the contrary endeavour to strengthen it by adding, that civility not only "costs nothing," but brings in a great deal of money. This must appear from the motives which induced my friend to return so constantly to the shop where he had been civilly treated. If, therefore, it costs nothing, it will not be the worst PROJECT in my budget, if I now take the liberty to suggest it as an infallible mode of acquiring wealth without the necessity of a capital, which must often be extensive, and is always hazardous. I have not, indeed, made any calculations on the subject, and consequently am not able to say, with the preciseness of a financier, what may be gained by the shop-keepers of Great Britain and Ireland, over and above all their other profits, by this article of civility only; but, having refreshed

my memory a little by a peep into the learned works of my old friends Edward Cocker and Thomas Dilworth, esqrs. I am inclined to think that an addition of twenty *per cent.* on all commodities would be a very moderate estimate. And if this be an advantage in the present times, which are reckoned somewhat hard, I leave my readers to judge what it must prove when we shall, by our present exertions, have either restored peace, or rescued the country from the fears of invasion.

It may be necessary, however, to apprize my readers, that although I have declined offering a minute and verbal definition of CIVILITY, it is no part of my PROJECT to insist upon any kind of cringing or servility. I will therefore allow the parties concerned to retain, behind the counter, that perpendicularity of figure which becomes an honest and independent Englishman; and I deprecate all that bowing which ends in angular acuteness, or Turkish prostration. Civility, indeed, requires only gentle inclinations and moderate bendings; but profound jerks and horizontal reverence are not necessary, because they would seldom be returned; and a profusion of corporeal action, without reciprocity, would be more absurd than a man walking a minuet

without a partner. In the case of many, especially of those who have lived to man's estate without an idea of manners, it might be sufficient to recommend a sort of negative civility; and merely to hint to them, when a customer visits their shop, not to swear at him, knock him down, or take him by the nose. This would, in many instances, be a great advance, and at least enable their customers to enter and depart without fears of personal safety, and without the necessity of a protecting guard.

There are many other classes of men to whom civility would be equally profitable; as, tavern and inn-keepers, servants of various descriptions, and certain classes of workmen, particularly those who are employed in jobs, or who undertake certain repairs, &c. to be executed within a given time; but as CIVILITY in this latter class would be quite useless without industry and fidelity to their engagements, I am unwilling to insist on the subject, lest I be thought one of those PROJECTORS who have brought the profession into disgrace by monstrous and unheard-of innovations.

I have indeed, perhaps, gone far enough in recommending the more extensive practice of civility; and I must quiet the alarms of some

steady and immutable men, by assuring them that I have no immediate design of abolishing rudeness. I am aware that it is an article of high antiquity, and of very great importance in certain situations; and for this reason I have endeavoured to confine my lucubrations principally to shop-keepers, and have studiously avoided the mention of superior stations and servants' halls. Travelling, too, being already very expensive, I shall take care how I recommend a system which may put more money into the pockets of coachmen or postillions. I am assured that there are situations in which even cursing and swearing are so necessary, as to be part of what is called official routine: in such cases CIVILITY must of course be suspended. But the nature of all these things will be better explained, when the parties concerned shall think it necessary to solicit exemptions from my plan. It may suffice here to say, that pride cannot be supported without a considerable degree of rudeness in constant use; and pride, we all know, is necessary. Far be it from me to deprive any man of the only quality which distinguishes him from another." '

It remains to be added, that if there be any who aspire to the superior rank of polite persons, and despise Civility as a quality to be

practised only behind a counter, where it is graced by the motions of the yard-measure, or accompanied by the musick of weights and scales; I would have such persons to recollect, that a civil shop-keeper, however low in the ranks of polished life, is, by virtue of this CIVILITY, a philosopher of the only valuable class, for he is a practical philosopher: he is a man who has to contend with the irritable humours of the wide world, and to go through all the vexations and persecutions of the merciless *shoppers*. He has to please not only those who buy, but those who come with no intention of buying, whose object is to spend time and not money, and to whom it is now become a sort of public pleasure to tease and perplex a shopkeeper, by insisting on a display of his goods, putting a thousand inquiries respecting price, and leaving the shop with the significant intimation that "they will call another time"—

I have just received the following letter from a waggish correspondent; and its brevity recommends it to immediate insertion.

"TO THE AUTHOR OF THE PROJECTOR.

"SIR,

"THERE are few papers, in Mr. Urban's Miscellany, which afford me more amusement or instruction than those which discuss the merits of the antient and modern architecture of this kingdom. I am, indeed, decidedly of that gentleman's opinion who claims what is called the Gothic for the pure invention of this country, and therefore you may suppose me the better pleased with his lucubrations. We always think well of those who think as we do. But, Sir, with all this fortunate coincidence of opinion, perhaps I may carry my dislike to Architectural Innovation farther than he does, because very disagreeable specimens of it meet my eye in places where he is not accustomed to look for them—not in cathedrals, and chapels, and castles, but at the Opera, the theatres, and public assemblies, at routs and breakfasts, in the Mall, on the Esplanade at Weymouth, and on the Steyne at Brighton.

"You may already conceive that I allude to the architecture of the female structure, which has been lately subjected to many innovations, in what Mr. Urban's correspondent would call

the *fantastic style*. Every old woman, or, to speak more respectfully, every elderly lady, I consider as a fine piece of Gothic architecture; which, although injured by time, still discovers the hand of a master, and is venerable even in ruins. With such sentiments, you may conceive how I am shocked to behold those awkward attempts at repairs, in which there is such a mixture of the orders as cannot be reconciled to any acknowledged principles of taste. Who, indeed, that fosters my prejudices, can restrain his indignation when he sees one of these antique edifices hid behind a modern Grecian front, beplastered and painted with as little taste as a church displays on that happy day when we first read in golden letters that it was 'REPAIRED and BEAUTIFIED: *Humphrey Wigsby* and *Jonathan Hod*, CHURCHWARDENS!' Who, I say, can behold this, and not deplore the barbarity and confusion which strive to unite the architecture of distant and discordant ages! Yet I am well assured, that, in repairing these edifices, it is always the practice to employ the youngest and most unexperienced architects, who never consider nor wish to study the principles of the building itself, how long it is likely to stand, or whether there would not be a greater pro-

priety in repairing defects so as to preserve the style of the age to which it belongs. How common it is to see a new Grecian front, or screen, which is intended to give an idea of a building not above twenty or thirty years old, and yet the owner knows that building to be thrice that age, and the columns, if examined properly, will be found tottering on their bases, and even the roof seems damaged beyond all repair! Such things remind us of those whimsical erections called *deceptions*, which are intended to take in country clowns, or cocknies, but must appear in their true light to every judicious eye. You may observe also, in those modern architectural innovations, a profusion of ornaments, which are so totally out of place, that every child must see they are valuable only in themselves, and not on account of any addition they make to the building, with which, in truth, they have no connexion. But, what is yet worse, the materials are so flimsy that they often disappear in a night, and are so little calculated for our climate as to be affected with very slight variations both of heat and cold. Here is therefore expence without profit, and with very little show. The object, I know, is to ornament those buildings with the attributes of Venus,

Juno, Minerva, and other goddesses; but what is this? is it not that introduction of heathen mythology into Christian temples, which every man of taste must censure? Besides, the purpose is not answered; while Infidelity is propagated, Sneerers increase; but where are the true worshipers?

"I am, Mr. PROJECTOR,
"your humble servant,
"GOTHICUS."

THE PROJECTOR. N° 23.

"Their methods various, but alike their aim,
The SLOVEN and the FOPLING are the same."
YOUNG.

October 1803.

THE ingenious Mr. SHENSTONE was a Projector of some eminence in his day, and one of his best Projects was that which had dress for its object, and which, falling in my way a few days ago, suggested the present paper. The

result of his lucubrations he conveys in the following words:

"If dress were only authorized in men of ingenuity, we should find many aiming at the previous merit in hopes of the subsequent distinction. The finery of an empty fellow would render him as ridiculous as a star and garter would one never knighted; and men would use as commendable a diligence to qualify themselves for a brocaded waistcoat, or a gold snuff-box, as they now do to procure themselves a right of investing their limbs in lawn or ermine. We should not esteem a man a coxcomb for his dress, till, by frequent conversation, we discovered a flaw in his title. If he was incapable of uttering a *bon mot*, the gold upon his coat would seem foreign to his circumstances. A man should not wear a French dress till he could give an account of the best French authors; and should be versed in all the Oriental languages before he should presume to wear a diamond."

On this scheme of my worthy predecessor I cannot refrain from making a remark, which probably has occurred already to most of my readers, namely, how melancholy a circumstance it is in the fate of us Projectors, that our schemes, whether adopted or rejected, are

always short-lived. If this plan for dressing men according to their own genius, instead of that of their taylors, had been carried into execution when proposed, it is plain it would not have descended to our times, nor, perhaps, have survived the learned contriver for many years. Indeed I am somewhat doubtful (for history is silent) whether it was not actually attempted, and whether it did not fail by one of those conspiracies between pride and folly which have overturned many better and more advantageous schemes. But, be this as it may, it is evident that in our days a revolution has taken place in our wardrobes, which renders it quite unnecessary to make any regulations respecting lace and embroidery. Dress is now neither the sign of wealth nor the emblem of vanity; and, if it were not for the painful and expensive endeavours of a few of the lower classes, the pride of finery would seldom be an occasion of complaint. We now walk in a kind of masquerade habits, under which we conceal, or think we conceal, our real characters and situations, and the more shabby and the more dirty this species of domino is worn, the more it is supposed to give an air of consequence to the wearer, by perplexing the con-

jectures of the spectator, and leaving more to be imagined than imagination can discover.

In exemplifying this, I shall not speak of the masquerade dresses of that antient place of "entertainment for mân and horse" called Newmarket, where nobles appear to be jockies and jockies nobles, and where, we may say with the author of Ecclesiastes, we "have seen servants upon horses, and princes walking as servants." Nor shall I go upon the Royal Exchange, where men transact business for thousands, to whom it would appear charity to give farthings; and who lend money to ministers of state with the appearance of Jews coming to bargain for their old clothes. Such transformations may be among the privileges of rank and wealth, which are not to be touched by an unlicensed pen. My present object is rather to advert to the system of shabbiness introduced some years ago by certain of the tribe of modern philosophers. These gentlemen, in their endeavours to overturn all former things, began with the enticing example of personal uncleanness, as an illustration, undoubtedly a very striking one, of the dignity of genius, and the beauty of virtue; or, perhaps, as an attempt to prove, that the best substitute for a throne is a dunghill. If

so, the attempt was ingenious: but I must do them the justice to say, that this as well as all their other endeavours have been very much misunderstood by the world at large, and that it was not always right to infer what they meant merely from what they said. For my own part, having not only perused their writings, but having listened to much of their conversation, and having beheld many of the only reforms they ever effected, I am willing to believe, that their regard for the practices of a "swinish multitude" was oftener to be taken in the literal than in the metaphorical sense. With regard to the state, I think I have discovered, that it was not monarchy but soap which they wished to put down; and, with respect to the Church, I am humbly of opinion they objected not so much to the order of bishops as to the institution of laundresses; and would even have tolerated cathedrals had they been permitted to burn washing-tubs. And while they pretended to rail against Lords and Commons, it was evident to me that their real aversion was to barbers and hair-dressers. Nay, many of them, in the past days of what was supposed to be political frenzy, would have submitted their heads to the axe rather than to the comb. Thus, while they contended for

the purity of their principles, they maintained an irreconcileable quarrel with the whiteness of their linen. That I am justified in putting this favourable construction on the intentions of our modern philosophers, and in deducing their intentions from their actions rather than from their words, will appear from the following evident circumstance, namely, that their writings have either been consigned to oblivion, or employed in affairs as far remote from decency as their hearts could wish, while the slovenliness of their dress still remains a distinguishing feature, and what they think a sure and certain indication of "original genius," "greatness of mind," "wonderful power of thinking," and a "turn for free inquiry."

But as this philosophy of foulness has been of late adopted by others, who do not partake of either the political or religious sentiments of the before-mentioned reformers, who have neither been hooted for their principles, nor indicted for their patriotism, and who, for want of foreign illumination, cannot see the connexion between republican governments and greasy small-clothes, it may be necessary to revive Mr. SHENSTONE's plan, with such alterations as the great changes which have taken place since his time shall require. If dirty

dress, therefore, is to be accounted a criterion of genius, it ought to be enacted, that such a mark of distinction shall not be worn by unqualified persons; and that no man shall be permitted to dispense even with the operations of a shoe-black, who cannot give some proof that he is entitled to such an honourable exemption by some uncommon effort of intellect, or that he is likely to become a shining character, without the aid of the "patent blacking."

Poets, I observe, are very much given to this kind of dress, insomuch that it may be reckoned the uniform of the sons of Apollo. Having read that all eminent poets have been poor, their imaginations form an inseparable connexion between rhymes and rags, and are for supporting the garb of antient genius long after the necessity has disappeared. But such aspiring bards ought to know, that their value is to be estimated by the current prices of Paternoster-row, and not the higglings of Duke's place. I must, therefore, insist that they do not presume on any thing unsightly and disgusting, until, by an examination, they have been considered as entitled to take the various degrees of foulness, or, if they have studied in France or Germany, to be admitted

ad eundem in our Universities. In a word, they must be qualified for shabbiness before they are allowed to impose upon the world by it. A few sonnets or elegies in the Magazines or Newspapers may, perhaps, obtain an exemption from the razor for a week; a good tragedy may justify the writer in wearing his shirt as many nights as it runs, but, if it be condemned, he must be compelled to shift, as a proof of his want of genius. Even a few prologues or Vauxhall songs may enable a man to be independent of a brush or a towel; but nothing less than an Epic poem from twelve to twenty-four books ought to make any writer fancy that he has a right to shock the delicacy of women, or to produce any of those hemitichs and parentheses which can be filled up only by a needle and thread.

With respect to philosophers, the restrictions ought to be equally severe, and no man permitted to fancy himself a Bacon or a Locke merely because he has a confirmed aversion to change his habits. Writers of travels may have a right to more soils than other authors; and, if they have made a trip to Paris, it may be characteristic to offend the senses at a fashionable visit. For historians and antiquaries some allowance likewise may be made, as

they dig so much among ruins and rubbish: I would not, however, permit any of them to reject the *innovations* which a clever laundress might introduce in their antient buck-baskets, unless he could prove some affinity to a Camden or a Dugdale. As for Projectors of my own race, it becomes me to speak with deference; there are, I am afraid, few of us who can claim to be exempted from whatever may serve to set us off to the best advantage. For my own part, it was not till a considerable time after Mr. Urban accepted my services, that I began to forget what the scraper of a door was placed there for; and even now I very much question whether I have popularity enough to make a stock last more than a day. As, therefore, I have so little presumption in myself, I trust I am qualified to speak with the more severity to others; and, having seen some approaches to certain affectations in some of my brethren, I must say, that no man ought to be permitted the greasy wig and black worsted stockings of Johnson, who cannot prove that he has written two Ramblers *per* week, and has made some progress in a Dictionary of the English Language.

But as some add to slovenliness other kinds of neglect and disregard of the common forms

of social life, it may be necessary to include them also in this law. I know a man who has endeavoured to pass for a very great wit, merely because he comes into company as late as the noted BRINSLEIUS, and as frequently forgets his engagements altogether. I have only to say to this imitator, that his claim shall be allowed, and he permitted to spoil as much dinner-cookery as he pleases, when he can produce two of the best dramas of modern times. Similar indulgences may also be extended, in cases of neglect, slovenliness, late hours, idle habits, and certain roughnesses of speech and manner, as soon as the parties claiming them shall become possessed of the situations in which these oddities have been privileged.

It is no doubt pleasing to the ambitious, that they can by any means be thought to resemble men illustrious for learning and wisdom; but they are mistaken if they carry their principle so far as to suppose that the resemblance is only to be discovered by an attack upon our senses. If they imagine that singularity is a merit, let it appear in something less common than discoloured linen, and more difficult than a cropt head. It surely militates against the common sense of mankind, that science and soap should

be averse to each other; and it will be impossible, by any process in the art of reasoning, to make out a clear connexion betwixt philosophy and slovenliness, or to find out what there is particularly facetious in a pair of dirty boots. If the wit has no reasons of a more pressing nature, he may be assured that his repartees will lose none of their point, were he occasionally to consult his tailor, or employ his laundress.

Upon the whole, it appears in vain to suppose, that because dress was formerly made to express riches and rank, it might now be so contrived as to exhibit genius and talents. It seems paradoxical, that what is old and tattered, or rusty and greasy, should denote certain qualities of the mind, and prove certain exertions of the intellect. They must have an imagination of a very extensive range who can bring together comparisons of things so remote. Far be it from me to deny the ingenuity of that useful body of men, whose business it is to clothe the naked; but a tailor must have wonderful abilities who can give a philosophic cut to a coat, or can shape the skirts with a poetical turn. There is much of wild fancy and extravagance in the celebrated system of Lavater; and some, I am told, have even at-

tempted to discover the mind of a man in his hand-writing. Yet, perhaps, in neither case is the improbability so great, as when others pretend to connect talents with articles of dress, and think that learning is most conspicuous where delicacy is most offended. We must have a new system of physiognomy to detect a poetical genius in the lappelle of a coat, or to discover the skill of a logician in the depth of a collar. We must form new associations in our minds before we can set it down as a rule, that the most slovenly man in company is always the most ingenious, and that no man can be independent in his mind, original in his conceptions, or brilliant in his expressions, who has not previously emancipated himself from the obligations of cleanliness, and has not sworn perpetual enmity against washerwomen and shoe-blacks; who would reform a nation sooner than mend a stocking, and introduce a new religion with less scruple than a new hat.

THE PROJECTOR. N° 24.

"Poets are poor, the meaning can you hit?
'Tis not the want of Money, but of Wit."
ANON.

November 1803.

ALTHOUGH complaints against the fair sex are what I am least disposed to encourage, being a very general as well as a particular lover, yet I have of late received so many Letters respecting a small party of ladies, who are usually known by the name of THE NINE, that I judge it requisite to take some notice of the subject. And this I shall endeavour to perform, not by printing the Letters of my Correspondents either *verbatim* or *seriatim*, but by exhibiting a general statement of their causes of offence, with such evidence for the defendants as may enable my readers to form a tolerable judgment of the whole case.

It has been represented to me, that these ladies were virgins of such high reputation as to be addressed by persons of genius, in all parts and in all ages of the world, and that

the returns made for such applications were elegant and even sublime; but that of late they have either totally disappeared, or have secreted themselves in such a manner, that some of my Correspondents express doubts of their existence, and propose that I should endeavour to discover their abode, which they say (addressing themselves to the well-known poverty of Projectors) may probably entitle me to a very handsome reward.

For my own part, I must premise that I never had much connexion with the ladies in question. When young, indeed, I paid a little court to them, as young folk generally do, who wish to be poetical in apple-pies and birds-nests; but whether they considered me as an unpromising suitor, or whether they were at that time otherwise engaged, the fact is, that I never received, in answer to my numerous importunities, more than two epigrams, the last part of an elegy, and the first line of an *impromptu*, which, I must confess, is matchless. I have not, however, been inattentive to their conduct in the case of other suitors, and am willing to allow with my Correspondents, that their general behaviour of late years has been somewhat dark and mysterious. Hence, in all my attempts to ascertain

the history and biography of these ladies, I have been foiled by inconsistencies of conduct, and by facts as contradictory as the evidence on one of those causes which lately compelled a learned Judge to declare, that "whenever a horse is in question, there is no coming at the truth." These ladies, for example, are represented as virgins, a character which it is delightful to contemplate, because connected with our most delicate notions of purity, simplicity, and virtue; yet it is notorious that they have sometimes bestowed favours upon men of very doubtful, not to say bad characters, and have promoted works of fancy which do no credit to any age or language. Sometimes they have befriended the authors of Iliads and Æneids, and at other times have been known to associate with libellers and slanderers; nay it is confidently said, in print, that they have not unfrequently been very free with men addicted to drinking, if not quite drunk in their company. Some have likewise accused them of lesser foibles, as of prudery; but this, perhaps, may be the retort of disappointment. It is natural that ladies so much courted should be a little coy; and surely it ought to be no reproach that they exercise the common privileges of their sex, and choose for themselves,

although that may be, and often is, attended with a greater display of caprice than of taste.

In my inquiries into their lives, I have been anxious, like a true biographer, to ascertain their religion and morals; but in those particulars I have encountered so many perplexities that I am afraid the subject must remain to be determined by some person of more research and information. On the whole, I am inclined to think them a species of Pagans a little modernized, and in that respect not unlike those among us who call themselves Christians, after having written away the essential doctrines of Christianity, and degraded the character of its Author. It is certain that Jupiter, or Jove, Apollo, Venus, Minerva, and other heathen deities, are more frequently in their mouths than they ought to be, and that they have even endeavoured to smuggle them into Protestant churches, in the shape of monuments and tombs.

Another reason I have for doubting of their orthodoxy, and which occurs to me regularly once a week, is the aversion they have ever shewn to those useful and popular compositions, Psalms and Hymns. It is well known how shabbily they behaved to Thomas Sternhold and John Hopkins, two worthy persons

of the Church of England, who requested their assistance nearly three centuries ago, in a translation of a certain very antient collection of sacred poetry. They were somewhat more civil to Messrs. Tate and Brady, who applied to them when engaged in a similar design; but yet such was their reluctance to contribute heartily in the cause, that very few judges have a good opinion of the little they performed. Some years after this last attempt, Dr. Watts invoked their aid; but, knowing how they had treated his predecessors, who addressed them plainly and literally, he adopted a round-about way of paying his court to them, and obtained some considerable favours of the *paraphrastic* kind; and from that circumstance many were of opinion that these ladies had gone over to the Meeting, and were become Noncons. Still, however, such was and is their dislike to any productions not connected with the deities of their younger years, that criticks are obliged to complain of piety and poetry being disunited—a complaint which may be admitted, although they have been known to smile occasionally on a few very good men.

But while from these circumstances a cloud of suspicion seems to hang over their religion, and while to some it appears to be ambiguous, if not

heathenish, there are reasons for thinking that their morals are improved, which is not a common case in the absence of the foundation of all morality. If these ladies are not often seen in our churches, they are still less often to be found in our theatres; and this I take to be one of the most extraordinary revolutions of an age in which so many things are turned upside down. It is the more remarkable because, some years ago, places were appointed for them on those nights when operas were performed, and operas were expressly written to invite them; yet when requested to be propitious on such occasions, they either fly out in unmannerly passions, or discharge such a torrent of nonsense, that many very good judges think it would be better if they staid away.

Now this is variously accounted for by my Correspondents. On the one hand, it is urged as an extraordinary instance of their caprice, that they should desert places which they formerly frequented every night with such men as Shakspeare and Jonson, Beaumont and Fletcher, &c. &c. and now scarcely deign to be seen above once in a season, perhaps for a benefit, when any of their old favourites happen to accompany them. It is asked, "what can be the humour of those ladies? where do they go,

and how do they amuse themselves? This is really most capricious and unaccountable." On the other hand, it is contended on their part, that being ladies of great purity and delicacy, they have seen too many things to shock them; and as to being invoked, they maintain that the call was impertinent, and not warranted; that they were required to assist fellows who succeeded only in writing nonsense, which they contrived to hide from the audience by means of certain crotchets and quavers borrowed, and sometimes stolen, from France and Italy; that if they had contributed their assistance, it would only have been placed on a footing with such productions as shew neither rhime nor reason; that many of their pretended admirers, even when addressing their fulsome courtship to them, would go into the company and share the favours of filthy drabs who assumed their names, and who were scarcely fit to sing ballads for halfpence in the streets; and, lastly, as to the places reserved for them on the opera nights, it was notorious that these were permitted to be filled by their lowest retainers, and that both authors and managers finding this to answer their purpose, had either ceased to apply to them at all, or had deputed such persons to solicit their aid as no ladies of their

rank could be supposed to associate with, unless their object were to insult public taste and morals.

Which of these representations is the true one, I must leave to the discernment of my readers. Certain it is that the ladies in question have of late deserted our theatres; and as to other places of amusement, they never were particularly fond of them. They have not for many years been in request at Ranelagh or Vauxhall; and as to routs, since they never game, their company is not expected. This is perhaps a little inconsistent: for it is certain they keep very late hours, as some of their first favourites have partaken of their cheering smiles in the dead of night. It is not a love of riot, however, that keeps them so long awake, but a disposition to pensive sadness and melancholy, to which the pale moon or the glimmering lamp are thought favourable.

Another argument that may be advanced in favour of these ladies is, that they have ever been more attached to poor and obscure persons, than to persons of rank and quality; not, indeed, that they have any aversion to the latter, when agreeable in other respects: but the great majority of their favourites have certainly been taken from men of a very inferior class in

society. On them they have bestowed fame, which is the only gift in their power; for they deal so little in riches, that, even in this country formerly, they were not able to preserve some of their greatest favourites from perishing in the streets. In thus distributing their favours, it may be thought there is something of caprice, or oddity of taste. It is surely singular that, like other great ladies, they seldom reside at their elegant seats; but are more often seen walking in dark alleys, and climbing up creaking stairs to more dark garrets. However, it may be a question whether the contempt shewn by the world to their greatest favourites is not one reason of their lately having become more shy and cautious?

But whatever may be our opinion as to this matter, and whatever suspicions we may entertain either as to their religion or morals, we are still more perplexed when we attempt to discover their politics. My Correspondents have thrown out some very severe censures on this head, which I am unwilling to copy at a time when no difference of sentiment ought to be indulged. I must confess, however, that I have perceived inconsistencies in their conduct which require to be explained. I observed, for example, that during the whole of the last

war, while they encouraged the enemy with revolutionary songs that distracted the brains of a whole nation, they affected a strange and mysterious kind of neutrality as to the great questions of peace and war. They would sometimes talk on a battle or massacre in the most lively manner, as things they liked to dwell upon; but when peace seemed to be returning, they considered it rather as politicians than as poets, and when actually proclaimed, they had nothing to advance, that had not been advanced an hundred times on similar occasions. And during the present crisis, it may be asked, where are their services? A few trifling favours they have bestowed; but what have they done in proportion to their eminent and well-known powers on former occasions? I could wish that these questions were satisfactorily answered. Perhaps these ladies may plead that improper persons have applied to them; and this is so frequently the case, that it may stand as a perpetual apology. It is one, however, of the truth of which we cannot always be certain. They may, indeed, be teased by blockheads occasionally; but at a time like the present, when the efforts of all must constitute the safety of all, they surely might condescend to drop any private animo-

sities, overlook petty affronts, and contribute something popular, spirited, and patriotic. Of this at least they may be assured, that their risk is that of existence; for if the barbarous fury of the enemy should prevail, the Muses would be banished the land, their seats razed from the foundation, and their works trod "under the hoofs of a swinish multitude."

I have thus ventured a few remarks on the ambiguous conduct of those ladies, in consequence of the complaints sent to me by many Correspondents. I have only to add, that I have still on hand a certain quantity of contra-evidence which ought not to be omitted, whatever credit may be due to it. I am informed that much which is reported of the coyness, shyness, deafness, and prudery of these ladies is absolutely unfounded; and that, upon a fair calculation, there are in this country not less than one thousand men, besides women and children, to whom these ladies are so complacent and obliging, so liberal and bounteous, that they have no reason to complain, and are, in their own opinion, their highly favoured worshipers: that this vast multitude never address them without receiving an immediate answer; and that reports of a contrary tendency are purposely manufactured by a set of persons

called criticks, who disperse them among the publick in monthly pamphlets, and by certain booksellers, who are notoriously interested. And lastly, adds a female Correspondent, with some indignation, "it is treating the MUSES like children, to suppose they do not come when called."

THE PROJECTOR. Nº 25.

"Maxima pars hominum morbo jactatur eodem."

HOR.

December 1803.

ALTHOUGH most of my predecessors have considered the imparting of SECRETS as a proof of folly, and the keeping of them as an act of friendship, I have been lately induced to consider this important subject in a quite different light; not as pertaining to any of the properties or operations of the mind, but as a peculiar species of disease affecting the body, particularly the organs of hearing and of speech, and

therefore to be cured, if cured at all, by medical rather than moral advice. Every view, indeed, that I can take, and every opinion I can collect, serve to persuade me that I have hit upon the true *rationale* of secrets, by considering them as wholly and solely within the province of our corporeal faculties. Why else, may I be permitted to ask, should we perceive that swelling and heaving, which are so conspicuous in a man's person when he is troubled with a secret which he wishes to discharge, but perhaps happens to have neither strength nor opportunity? How often is it said of a man who exhibits certain well-known symptoms; "Ah! he is labouring with a secret; see what pain he is in: well, he will get relief somehow by and by; how he struts and swells! what pangs! but he will soon be easy!" And why should a secret affect the organs of speech in the very extraordinary manner which is frequently observed, when the most stentorian voice is weakened down to a whisper, so low that few can hear it, and the words are obliged to be handed from one to another, like buckets at a fire? and when the patient, in his extreme agonies and danger of bursting, can scarcely articulate more than half words, particles, or syllables, which the

hearers are left to fill up? Is not this a mere bodily complaint? And if it be so, how much are the advocates of Materialism indebted to the Projector for having furnished them with a new proof of their doctrine, as valid surely as any they have been able to advance?

Again; is not a secret, no matter of what kind, often accompanied with a fluttering at the heart, a restlessness, or what the physicians call *anxietas circa præcordia*, which, if the matter be long pent-up without any opportunity of a vent, produces in the one sex a number of convulsive winks, nods, and shrugs; and in the other a species of hysterics, ending in a profuse perspiration of whispers? From these facts, which are proved every day in common experience, I am humbly of opinion that a secret too long kept may be considered as a disease, as far as it affects individuals: but there are other facts, equally obvious, which no less certainly demonstrate that it frequently appears as an epidemic, or plague, spreading over a whole district. In the country, a secret will often silence an entire parish, and cause the inhabitants to meet together at tea, or at church, or walk about from field to field and from lane to lane, without a word being spoken, except in a voice scarcely audible,

until the patients lay their heads close to each other; and with such twitches and motions of eyes, eyebrows, chins, lips, and shoulders; such see-sawing and pit-patting of feet as are never beheld on any other occasion, the colick not excepted, although, by the way, it bears a stronger resemblance to the latter, than to any other disorder known in the annals of Warwick-lane.

But as epidemical diseases put on different appearances according to the air, soil, &c. so the same secret which has operated, as now related, in the country, will produce very different symptoms in town. When, for example, a secret is inflicted on any of the larger parishes of Westminster, as St. James's, or St. George's; besides the loss of speech, and those paralytic symptoms in the head and face already enumerated, if the disorder be of a *bad* kind, it will in a few days break out in large paragraphs of a white and black colour, which many consider as very foul spots; and sometimes in caricature prints of all colours. And this species of discharge, which is principally confined to the metropolis, appears to effect the speediest cures, as the secret is soon forgotten. It was in this way that Lady ——, and Lady ——, and Lady ——, infected the

town some time ago with a kind of secret which was called a *crim. con.* and which broke out among certain females of rank, who communicated it to their ladies-maids, and they to the newspaper writers (who are by constitution very liable to the disorder); and thence most people were troubled with it, before they got relief in the way I have now detailed.

As I have not the honour to belong to the faculty, it is not my business to treat this disorder in a scientific way; nor shall I, for the same reason, endeavour to illustrate it by technical phrases; but as I have not been able to find any good account of it in medical books, nor from medical men (who are nevertheless said to be very conversant in secrets), I may be permitted to add a few observations, which are the result of my own experience.

This disease, then, in the first place, does not operate equally or regularly in all patients. I have known some who have had an inveterate secret for years, without being apparently affected with it; they have allowed, however, that they sometimes feel twitches and spasms, as if it were ready to break out, but they have generally prevented that by keeping their mouth shut while the attack was upon them. Time will often wear out the disorder in those

whom it does not find of a restless and gadding disposition. Sitting still, indeed, and keeping quiet, will often promote a cure, but there is great danger in violent locomotion; and with respect to diet, tea and wine have been found very useful in putting an end to the painful symptoms; but more of these matters will be urged hereafter.

In the second place, I have to remark, that it attacks persons of all ages; nor is there any period of life without some cases of it. It often breaks out at school, but it is then of a trifling kind, and seldom lasts long. Young ladies, especially those who indulge too freely in circulating libraries, are particularly liable to secrets. To them great danger has accrued from their concealing the case from their parents and guardians. Yet this is rather a whimsical delicacy, since they are ready enough to impart it to servants, and other persons, who are not remarkably gifted with the powers of retention. In endeavouring, likewise, to obtain relief, they have recourse to very singular remedies, which not a little resemble the cures of antient days for witchcraft. They appear, indeed, to be affected with a capricious taste which is accountable on no other principle. For instance, they prefer a ladder of

ropes to the most substantial staircase that ever was constructed; and in leaving a house, which they do at hours when no other person would think of such a step, they generally go out at the window instead of the door. Sometimes, in mild cases of the disorder, they are relieved by a clergyman's repeating their names in a parish church for three Sundays in succession; and sometimes by having recourse to a magical spell which they call a licence. In other very bad cases, they have been known, of late years, to adopt a more singular remedy, that of a visit to a blacksmith in Scotland.

But although young people are liable to this distemper, it is far more peculiar to those of advanced life; many of whom are so often attacked by it, that they live in a perpetual state of painful agitation, and, when the fit is violent, may be seen flying from company to company, and from route to route, seeking relief, and often infecting their neighbours. With others, such is the force of habit, that in a course of years the disorder itself becomes healthful, like the gout; and I know several worthy ladies, far advanced in years and celibacy, who declare that, if they miss the fit for a month or six weeks, they are not happy until it returns. They maintain that it sup-

plies them with exercise and good spirits, and prevents that listlessness and apathy which fix people's attention wholly on themselves, without a thought of what their neighbours are about.

With respect to persons of high rank, it is notorious that they are often troubled with secrets; which, however, they have learned to bear with so much fortitude as to conceal all the common and outward symptoms of the disorder. Privy counsellors, ministers of state, and ambassadors, are very liable to be attacked; but it has rarely happened, or at least in this country, that they have betrayed their inward feelings, notwithstanding the very great care which by-standers employ in watching their looks, and viewing every muscle of their faces with Stock-exchange-magnifiers, which are the highest known in modern optics.

I must not conceal that, as it has lately been the fashion to counterfeit certain bodily imperfections, blindness, lameness, lisping, &c. which are thought pretty and becoming; so there are also some persons who affect to be mightily troubled with secrets, and yet, if properly examined, have nothing of the kind worthy of attention. This has been eminently the case with politicians from the days of Ad-

dison's Upholsterer to the present hour. They fancy it confers on them a degree of consequence, because it collects crowds around them to witness the airs they give themselves, and how well they counterfeit a real secret. Little compassion, therefore, seems due to this class of patients; since, if they ever have the complaint at all, they must be considered as having brought it upon themselves, by keeping improper company, or reading improper books. It is reported that a hypochondriac gentleman, who was very fond of Dr. Buchan's Domestic Medicine, used to fancy he had every disorder described in that work: and I have been acquainted with some politicians, far enough removed from the ken of his Majesty's ministers, who, after swallowing a course of news-papers and pamphlets, have imagined themselves affected by the secrets of all the cabinets of Europe, and have exhibited symptoms of swelling, pain, anxiety, and restlessness, which have often so imposed on many charitable persons, that they have sometimes given them money, and sometimes victuals, to promote a discharge of the complaint. I must say, however, that they are but superficial observers who are thus taken-in; and such impostors are now less successful, because it has been made notorious

by repeated experience, that if ever they are afflicted by a real secret they do not keep it a day; for it escapes through the pores of the tongue, the moment they are exposed to the scent of a printing-office, or to the warm atmosphere of a coffee-room.

It must likewise be recorded of this disorder, that there are some persons of peculiar constitutions or habits, who are not dangerously affected by the most violent secrets. And these are, first, a certain description of females, so well known for their happy knack in getting rid of this complaint, that about a century ago, when one of them had *kept a secret* for a considerable time without asking or obtaining relief, it was termed *A Wonder*, and was actually worked into a play, and brought out on the stage, to the great astonishment and admiration of very sensible persons living at that time. Now if no other benefit to society results from these my lucubrations, I shall beg leave to take some credit for having revived the memory of so extraordinary a case.

A second class, who are but little disturbed by secrets, are persons of a loquacious turn, those who are most anxious to speak when they have least to say. They consider the complaint as some persons, who are exposed

to all vicissitudes of weather, consider a common cold; they are seldom without it, and seldom sensible that they have it; it comes and goes without much observation. A third sort, who very easily shake off this complaint, are your well-meaning people, who never "mean any harm in what they say, but speak of things for speaking-sake." They take some pains, however, in the cure of the distemper, and their voice may be observed to be considerably affected; particularly if they are addicted much to the drinking of tea, an herb, I know not for what reason, which is almost a specific in this disorder, especially if assisted by a little of any kind of cordial.

And here I must advert to what was hinted in a former part of this paper; namely, that tea and wine have always been found great promoters of that discharge which expels secrets from the constitution. They do not, however, operate alike: nor will they operate at all, unless taken in liberal quantities; and in both cases it requires that the patients who take these medicines should sit close together to the number of eight or nine, for this is a complaint never to be relieved in solitude. With respect to wine, there are some who require very large doses before the complaint is

expelled; and the cure, when completed, is accompanied with a very considerable degree of fever and inflammation, and, in very bad cases, with a species of palsy in the limbs, and delirium in the brain. For this reason, and because it is apt to leave behind much weakness and flushing, or rather blushing in the face, the wiser part of the faculty consider this cure as tantamount to a disease. All this, however, evidently confirms the doctrine with which I set out, in proving that secrets are to be treated like other disorders, by applying remedies which are sometimes mild, and sometimes violent; sometimes irritating, and sometimes stupifying.

Having thus endeavoured to establish my theory, I am lastly to propose, that, as secrets have hitherto been protected partly by the laws of honour and partly by the laws of the land, the legislators of both these codes ought to revise their proceedings upon my system. They ought to consider whether many of those diseases of the breast, asthmas, panting, fidgets, convulsive motions, approaches to bursting, &c. have not been occasioned by a pent-up secret; and form a new set of regulations better adapted to the wants and necessities of a talkative age, and the peculiar habits of communi-

cative constitutions. In what manner they are to promote this important revolution in the management of secrets, it would be presumptuous in me to prescribe. I shall, therefore, leave the subject in its present state of suspense, with only this hint, that perhaps, under all circumstances of the case, it might be proper in family, individual, or political secrets, to fix a period when they may expire of themselves, unless renewed by the mutual consent of the parties who communicate and receive the ticklish infection: in other words, I would suggest that secrets be included in the *statute of limitation.*

THE PROJECTOR. N° 26.

"Quotidie morimur, quotidie enim demitur aliqua pars vitæ, et tunc quoque, cum crescimus, vita decrescit."

SENECA.

December 1803.

THE conclusion of the year has generally been recommended as a proper opportunity to review a part, at least, of our past lives. I doubt not that many of my readers have embraced so na-

tural an occasion; and I hope they have derived satisfaction from the retrospect; but this, I fear, cannot be the case with others. A very great proportion of mankind, if they have attempted to recollect the events of an expiring year, have been able to recollect little that will bear examination, or afford pleasure. They enter cheerfully, however, on the commencement of another period, in hopes of doing what they never did before, of employing time so that it may not be wasted, and of performing acts which may be remembered without shame.

There are few in whom a new year does not produce new resolutions, and new promises of amendment; but whether these have no better foundation than in the gaiety of the season, when accompanied with its harmless indulgences; or whether such vows, however sincere, are untimely broken in its excesses; it frequently happens that the new year brings no remarkable accession of wisdom or happiness, and, like its predecessors, affords only additional proofs of human weakness and levity.

Yet, in whatever manner time is trifled away, and however imperceptibly days, weeks, and months, pass over us, we in general think ourselves powerfully interested in the value of

time, when we begin to calculate it by fixed periods, and to reckon for others what they are unwilling to reckon for themselves. When we ascertain the portion already allotted to us, and compare it with the general distribution among our fellow-creatures, we are compelled to reflect, and to acknowledge, however transient or permanent such reflection may prove, that our stock is fast exhausting, and that something yet remains to be done, which appears to have been the purpose for which human beings were furnished with reason, but which has hitherto been neglected; and, if we carry these reflections a little farther, we shall be sensible that our attainment has yet borne no proportion to our anxious pursuit of happiness; and that, whether our hopes have been reasonable or excessive, life has not yielded us what we were taught to expect.

It is said by our celebrated Moralist, of one of his friends*, that "he grew first regular, and then pious." The process, I believe, is not uncommon. I question whether it has not invariably taken place, unless with the happy few who have uniformly and uninterruptedly improved the advantages of a religious educa-

* Of Gilbert Walmsley, Esq. by Dr. Johnson.

tion. It is certainly the case with those who have forgot their secret duties in the tumult of gay associations, and who have experienced, in their most fascinating pleasures, more of vexatious privation, than of substantial enjoyment. To such men, if seduced by easiness of temper, and not debased by sensual indulgences, the value of time will appear too high for wanton expenditure. They will measure what they have got by what they want, and will soon be convinced, that the business for which they were sent into life, has not yet been performed. They will "first become regular, and then pious;" for whatever produces reflection will produce retirement, and retirement, in its turn, will invigorate reflection, and combine fleeting thoughts, and temporary resolutions, into a system of thinking and acting, adapted to the present wants, and future hopes, of a being, not only rational, but accountable.

To remedy waste of time, some have bound themselves by a number of minute and fixed rules, in which each portion of the day is allotted, or intended to be allotted, to a certain and invariable purpose. There are, however, many inconveniencies attending a plan of this kind. It is, at best, an attempt to give to man the regularity of mechanism, which can-

not be done, without robbing him of those more valuable properties which distinguish him from a machine. It may render him stiff, obstinate, and unkindly pertinacious; but it deprives him of half his usefulness, by leaving no provision for unforeseen events, and accidental calls upon his attention, or his humanity. But in truth, independent of these circumstances, which are stated merely on a presumption of its being possible, the failure of the attempt has been repeatedly accompanied with the most unpleasant consequences. When a man finds himself tied down by certain rules, which take in no view of probable events, his embarrassments are increased by the laws and opinions he has formed to himself; and, in his own judgment, he stands condemned for not adhering to resolutions to which it was unnecessary, if not foolish, to subscribe. Some parts of his mechanical arrangement get out of order; and this hurts his temper, without improving either his head or his heart. He is wrong, he can scarcely tell why; there is a sum wanting in his calculation, which he knows not how to make up. He is vexed at his want of firmness, when he ought to blame his want of foresight, and ought to recollect, that a general and strong sense of the value of

time may be preserved, amidst every duty of life, without the necessity of specific vows, and particular engagements.

Still, on the other hand, it must be confessed, that, without this strong sense of the value of time, and without somewhat of perpetual anxiety to preserve it, and that from motives of conscience, rather than selfish convenience, we are in danger, especially in a crowded metropolis, of falling into that waste which is more frequently followed by repentance than amendment. There are hundreds whose business it is to rob others of their time, and, without scruple, to deprive them of that for which no reparation can ever be made, but yet who do this with an air of good-humour, and even of kindness, which is almost irresistible, and with such an insensibility of wrong, as seems to soften censure, and prevent regret. Men of regular habits, whether of business or study, are the persons who suffer most severely by the depredations of this species of public robbers, against whom neither law nor custom has made any provision. Custom, indeed, is unfortunately on their side. To refuse the visits, or not to return the visits of such well-meaning friends, is accounted the height of unkindness, if not of downright rudeness.

And how much is this supposed rudeness aggravated, when we discover, by their apologies, that no visiting or gossiping is the effect of design, but of mere accident! This we gather from the usual apologies;—"They call in just to pass an hour; they happened to come into the street, or, what is equivalent, to be very near the street, and could not, in good-manners, miss your door; they hope they are not troublesome; they hope you are not busy;" all which you must confirm with perfect good-breeding; and, after perceiving clearly, but with the total absence of concern, that they have interrupted what they can never renew, and deprived you of what they can never restore, they depart in quest of farther prey. Thus their day is consumed at the expence of those who have learned to set some value on time, while themselves reap no advantage, and are not sensible they have done any mischief. Against this army there was once a protection in bad weather; but, unfortunately, they consist now of cavalry as well as infantry, and, like the antient Britons, "slay in chariots," as well as on foot. Nay, some of them have been heard to declare, that they prefer bad weather for visits and gossipings, because then "they are sure to find their friends at home."

To enumerate all the contrivances which have been invented to consume time, would be to enumerate all the public and private amusements of the age. Out of so great a number, a selection might undoubtedly be made of a few, of which we may partake with innocence, or at least without any greater waste of time than may be necessary to render serious occupations more welcome. Relaxation of some kind seems necessary, and may be enjoyed by every class of society; but the grand *desideratum* is, the exact *quantum* necessary. Some have ascertained this in their own case; but the calculations of others have been so very erroneous, that business and pleasure have changed sides, or rather natures, and all fatigues are become the fatigues of amusement, the diseases of idleness, for which neither nature or art can administer a remedy. Where this is the case, if any good qualities remain, it can only be expected, that with our censure we should mix some grains of pity. The infatuation is hopeless, and probably beyond the reach of admonition. But we have seldom seen that good qualities remain long in persons whose lives are spent in the pursuit of pleasure. Without any notorious offences, without those which the law condemn, we yet

may perceive a depravity of heart, an indifference to all the duties of life, and a tacit, if not a professed contempt for the principles and observances of religion.

It is impossible to form an estimate of any human character, unless we take into the account how time is employed. The characters, whom we should value upon other accounts, we naturally dislike, and perhaps despise, when we perceive them, even in advanced life, consuming their time in idle and frivolous pursuits, and, perhaps, leaving the world, without the remembrance of one year well employed, or one exertion, or good act, which may distinguish them from the common mass of mankind. On the contrary, we contemplate with esteem, and we record with pleasure, the productive industry either of mercantile or studious life. The general sense of the world is decidedly in favour of those by whom useful arts, and elegant literature, have been promoted; and has agreed to consign to oblivion those, whatever their rank or fortune, of whom it can only be remembered, that they were prodigal of time and of money, without either conferring or receiving benefit.

It is, perhaps, rather an unfavourable symptom, that, in times so critical as the present,

the demand for amusements should appear to increase, without any improvement in their quality. But this is a natural consequence of that demand. The more time we devote to amusement, the sooner we become satiated with such as exist, and require a change. I am not, therefore, among the number of those who censure the caterers of public amusement, because they produce things "stale, flat, and unprofitable." Their rational stock is exhausted: it will no more attract attention, however careful the revivals, and however new the decorations. The requisition is no longer for something good, but something new; while the merit of writers is, not that of accuracy, but expedition; and they are praised, not because they exhibit a pure taste, but because they know how to gratify a vitiated appetite.

He, therefore, who learns to husband the time he used to bestow on public amusements, may be thought to have quitted them without much regret. But in private amusements there still remain seductions, against which it may be useful to be prepared, if we have any serious wish that the year, on which we now enter, should leave behind it the recollection of well-spent time. He that can reflect at all, may recollect in what points he has been wasteful,

and in what he might have been an œconomist. And, while this remark is offered to readers in general, it would be unjust not to take some notice of the many thousands who, roused by a sense of their country's danger, lately threw off all habits of idleness and indulgence, and painfully, as well as gallantly, have devoted their days and nights, their time, their riches, and, I may add, their health, to accomplish themselves in the skill, and enure themselves to the fatigues, of that art, on which, humanly speaking, we must depend for our safety, and preservation as a people. Too much praise cannot surely be bestowed on them; and, in their retrospect of the past year, they may well be allowed to take comfort, from the recollection of this gallant and patriotic effort.

Nor is it less consolatory to reflect, that, while our Governors have not been inattentive to such means of defence as they can command, there seems on the public mind a general sense and feeling of our duties to that Being, who alone can give strength to our arms, and protection in the hour of danger. And let us, while we trust in his interposition in our favour on the present occasion, entertain also a hope, that what is now strongly felt will be long remembered; and that our repentance

will not be less sincere, nor our supplications less fervent, when we have no external enemy to combat, and no national calamity to dread.

THE PROJECTOR. N° 27.

> "Steal but a Beggar's Dog,
> And give it Timon, why the Dog *coins* gold."
>
> SHAKSPEARE.

January 1804.

ALTHOUGH the poverty of us Projectors be notorious, men in general seem to consider it rather as a matter of amusement, than as a subject for serious investigation. Yet surely it is not befitting a great and liberal nation, that those who labour and toil during all seasons and weathers, in a most disinterested vocation, and, under every disadvantage, expose themselves for the good of the publick, should not only be left to starve, but that their hunger should be a topic for merriment. And how frequently do we find this to be the case, while

few will take the trouble to ask why these things are so!

One or two reasons have recently occurred to me, on which I wish to dilate a little, as introductory to the main design of this paper; and my readers will, I trust, the more readily bear with my loquacity on a subject which may appear selfish, when they are told, as I now tell them, with great concern, that, although I have discovered something like a cause, I do not pretend to offer any thing like a cure. It appears, then, to me, that the number of Projectors has of late increased beyond the regular, and even the extraordinary demands of the public; and experience proves, that whenever this happens, in the case of any commodity, it is attended with a proportional diminution of value. The noble art of Projecting, or scheming for the public good, which was formerly confined to a few choice geniuses, who appeared, like meteors, once or twice in a century, is now assumed by so many persons, in all ranks of life, that it would not be too much to say, *Every man* is become his *own Projector*. That this universal ambition is, in a few instances, attended with good effect, I cannot altogether deny; but I hope I may be allowed, at the same time, to say, that it has been the

means of overstocking the publick with a multitude of pretenders and intruders, who are not qualified to strike out any thing new or enterprising.

There is another reason for the poverty of Projectors, and not altogether unconnected with the above. Many envious persons, who are, against their will, obliged to acknowledge the excellence of any new plan laid before the publick, will nevertheless affect to overlook or despise it for years, until either it seems to be forgotten, or the author of it has gone to receive the reward of his merit, and of his sufferings, in another world. When this happens, they produce the invention with, perhaps, some trifling alteration, carry it into execution, and lay claim to the first discovery. Now I appeal to my candid readers, and I hope all my readers are of that description, whether they are not more sensible of the ingenuity than of the justice of such a practice, and whether it be not rather cunning than honest? I shall, however, endeavour to illustrate these remarks by an instance of very recent date, and, I hope, handle the subject with all the tenderness due to the parties concerned, the blame of whose conduct I may yet be permitted to insinuate, as becomes a lover of truth and

justice, and a Projector anxious to guard the property of his poor, persecuted, and plundered brethren.

Nearly a century ago, some of my predecessors, who were not tame *Spectators* of what went forward in the world at that time, perceiving, among the play-going people of their days, a predilection for the animal creation, proposed the introduction of such beasts and birds as might appear properly qualified to fill up certain parts in the drama. But this scheme, although well recommended, and clearly demonstrated to be practicable, even on a very extensive scale, fell to the ground. The publick at large was not yet ripe for so great a revolution, nor disposed to see plays acted without some decent proportion of the human species on the stage. The record of it, however, remaining in print, the manager of one of our theatres lately laid hold of it, studied it with great attention, foresaw the possibility of success, and the strongest probability of profit, and determined to attempt a revival of the scheme, by adding a Newfoundland dog to the other performers of a new opera, which was, in the theatrical phrase, to be *got up* with all the strength, not only of the house, but of the kennel. An author was accordingly

employed who could write a part suited to the talents of this dumb candidate for public applause; and a fable was invented such as might exhibit a dog to the greatest advantage. How well the scheme has succeeded, the most crowded audiences of modern times, in the largest theatre ever built, have amply testified every night since the first appearance of this bold Project.

It has not, however, been unanimously applauded by the criticks, from whom, perhaps, perfect unanimity is not to be expected in any case. Some of them admit the ingenuity, while they doubt the originality of the plan, and wish to remind us of the learned dogs and pigs which the managers under the auspices of St. Bartholomew have for many years exhibited in Smithfield. Among these criticks of memory and research, my readers may suppose, from what has been already advanced, that I am to be classed. But there are others who think proper to represent the introduction of dogs, as an insult to the dignity of the drama, an infringement of the rights of Man, and probably as the first step to the entire expulsion of the human species. Here I beg leave to pause: I cannot hastily subscribe to these opinions. I have not that quick apprehension

of the dangers of innovation which prompts some politicians to look always to extreme cases. With whatever view the managers introduced this new performer (and my private opinion is, that they had but one intention), I am inclined to think that much may be said in favour of the experiment, and much good may be expected, if it can be carried on to what our new philosophers call *perfectibility*. I am certain, at least, that in this conjecture I shall have the approbation of that ingenious and long-sighted philosopher, who declares, that he can conceive the happy days when a plough may perform its operations in the field, without the impulse of man or horse. Surely a much less effort may be sufficient to render a dog as good an actor as some who have, in the bills, enjoyed that title for a much longer period. This, I trust, I may venture to affirm, if the mere question of ability is considered; but there are other weighty points to be attended to. Although the managers may deserve censure for arrogating to themselves the invention of a very old scheme, yet if it tends equally to their advantage, and to the amusement and refined taste of the publick (which seems to be the case in the present instance), we ought to make every possible allowance,

extend our forgiveness, and hail the day on which we have seen a British Theatre become a place of *Entertainment for Man and Beast.*

In this true spirit of candour, then, I already foresee, that although mere profit is the only ostensible object, our managers have a much deeper design in prospect, by which the publick will ultimately be a gainer. It is well known that, of late years, by what succession of causes we shall not now inquire, the salaries of performers have been augmented truly enormously. We hear of 20*l.* and sometimes of 30*l.* *per night*, as the salary of certain ladies and gentlemen. It is evident that, without a suitable encouragement on the part of the publick, the treasuries of our theatres must soon be exhausted; and the fact is, as I am credibly informed, that the publick has, in many instances, been so remiss in their patronage, that very great losses have been sustained. Another consequence of this liberality on one side, and shyness on the other, or, to speak politically, this fatal disproportion betwixt expenditure and receipt, has been the confutation of that pleasing idea, that great salaries make great performers. In this view of the matter, it must be obvious, that the introduction of four-legged actors, who are equally popular,

i. e. draw as full houses (which has been the case in the instance before us), must be a prodigious saving.

Another circumstance deserves here to be considered, which has given managers a great degree of trouble and anxiety, and has been often accompanied with empty boxes. The greatest performers, who are at the same time the best paid, are apt to relax in their services at certain times, and that without any intention or wilful purpose of disobliging either the manager or the town; but merely from a species of torpor, which great actors sometimes feel, benumbing their faculties, and which can be removed only by a fresh stimulus applied to the part affected. The appearance of a rival has, in many cases, proved very effectual in curing this disorder, and restoring to the actor his proper tone and agility; but this is a cure which, in the case of eminent and dserving actors, can be very rarely resorted to, because the town is not always disposed to assist the operation in such numbers as to promote it. Now, under the pressure of these difficulties, was it not wise in the managers to start a rival, who boggled so little about articles of engagement, that he came when whistled for, whose merits the town immediately acknowledged,

and who has already produced houses of which Shakspeare and Garrick might have been proud? The truth is, it was not only wise, but, if my information be not incorrect, it has been eminently successful. The other performers, to a man and woman, are now more on the alert, and more desirous to regain their popularity, snatched from them by an actor who will not be reasoned with, and who will admit of no improper liberties. I cannot conceal, however, that perhaps the experiment has been carried too far. Some of the performers are seriously apprehensive lest they may never be able, after the appearance of so popular a genius, to regain their favour with the town, and fill the house as they were wont to do. They say, perhaps with some truth, that if the managers had begun at the bottom of the scale of talents, and produced a bull, a bear, or some more illiterate specimen, whether from Bartholomew Fair, or Bartholomew Lane, it would have been sufficient for a mere experiment, and, perhaps, have occasioned a very salutary rivalship; but at once to pit so much sagacity and fidelity against the company, was forming a contrast too strong for the present state of dramatic merit.

The justice of these suggestions I shall not stop to investigate, because, in whichever way we determine, our decision can now produce no effect. The managers have given the question out of their own hands, by referring to that tribunal from which there is no appeal. The town has decided, as far as numbers and door-money can decide, in favour of the quadrupedal performer. The consequence need not be enlarged upon: it is evident that they must proceed in bringing on, from time to time, a succession of animals, whelped, or littered, or kittened, into performers. I trust, however, that, with their usual prudence, they will produce them principally in new pieces; and that for two reasons: First, that they may avoid comparisons, which will be wise; and, secondly, to spare the feelings of other actors, which will be humane. Yet such has been the encouragement and patronage, generously, and tastefully, bestowed upon this experiment, that it must be repeated in one way or other; and whoever knows any thing of zoology, knows that a very wide field is now opened. As to other matters, if I may judge from the newspapers of the last month, the art of criticism will require no other alteration in the case of these new performers, than the intro-

duction of the words *sagacity* and *fidelity* a little oftener than has become customary.

So numerous are the talents of the dog, that naturalists have written prolix volumes on the subject, collected from the experience of all nations. Yet it now appears that some of their more valuable qualities have been entirely overlooked. They have been renowned for watching a house, guarding a flock of sheep, leading the blind, catching a hare or fox, and many other tricks and stratagems becoming quadrupeds: but what are these to that merit, hitherto not even hinted at by naturalists, which they have exhibited on the stage? There they have not only performed their part without the aid of a prompter, or the temptation of a salary, but have attracted the most numerous and brilliant audiences, at a season when the town is generally empty; and have drawn down bursts of applause, which the audience seem to think no other performers deserve in the same degree. It is surely no small merit to share that popularity which was once the exclusive property of the *works* of Shakspeare and Jonson, of Congreve and of Sheridan; and of the *acting* of Booth and Betterton, of Garrick and of Siddons. Did not our great moralist deserve the name of

"Blinking Sam," when he could see no farther than the revolution prophesied in the following lines:

"But who the coming changes can presage,
And mark the future periods of the stage?
Perhaps where Lear has rav'd, and Hamlet dy'd,
On flying cars new sorcerers may ride:
Perhaps (for who can guess th' effects of chance?)
Here Hunt may box, or Mahomet may dance."

I have thus endeavoured to account for the conduct of the managers, in a matter which appears to have been misunderstood in its effects, although I agree with those who complain of its origin. I have discovered, without much research, a design in all this, which does not float on the surface; and I have explained it, however unpleasant that explanation may be to some performers. It is, on the part of the managers, an appeal to the town, to quicken the efforts of those who appear to have been remiss in their duty. It is an experiment, to try whether the places of those who cannot be softened by salaries and benefits, may be advantageously filled by those to whom salaries and benefits are unknown. The trial, however, is but begun; and one dog only has been formally engaged. Who can tell how

many of that species may yet be made substitutes for the best of our authors and actors? and, when dogs shall be exhausted, who shall fix bounds to the performances of cats, of monkies, and of baboons? Or, what sublimity of feeling, and what closeness of attention, can the present drama produce, compared to the hopes and fears of an audience, when they shall be treated with the novel spectacle of real tigers prowling for real prey, or the more extraordinary appearance of a real lion sparing a real virgin?

THE PROJECTOR. N° 28.

"Sæpe et multum hoc mecum cogitavi, bonîve an mali plus attulerit hominibus et civitatibus COPIA DICENDI." CICERO.

February 1804.

FROM the few words I have selected as the motto of this paper, it appears that Cicero, the most eloquent of the Roman Orators, and of

whose eloquence we are in possession of a much larger proportion than of any antient orator, often perplexed himself with the question, Whether the faculty of Speech had done most good or evil? In what manner he determined this question, or whether he determined it at all, we cannot now ascertain: but as he was a lawyer, and much employed in very important and intricate causes, he undoubtedly knew enough both of the evil and good of speech, to qualify him for the discussion.

Our countryman LOCKE expresses the same doubt in, I think, the third book of his celebrated Essay on the Human Understanding, "He that shall well consider the errors and obscurity, the mistakes and confusion, that is spread in the world by an ill use of words, will find reason to doubt, whether language, as it has been employed, has contributed more to the improvement or hindrance of knowledge among mankind." Mr. Locke, like Cicero, here insinuates his doubt, without resolving it, although he unquestionably knew enough of the good and evil of metaphysical disputes to be a very proper judge of the matter.

It may be, perhaps, reckoned strange that Cicero should suggest a doubt which could not be resolved in the space of eighteen centuries

after his death; Mr. Locke, we see, takes it up, looks at it, and lays it down again. I strongly suspect Cicero was afraid to enter upon a decision which might be fatal to the gentlemen of the Law; and perhaps Locke was unwilling to interrupt the career of Metaphysicians, to whose theories he had given a new currency. Such is the imperfection of human nature, and the mixture of private interests with public professions, that in the writings of the most celebrated of mankind, we meet with something that, to use a city phrase, "smells of the shop."

I would not, however, have my readers imagine from this introduction, that I am about to discuss a question which two such men left unresolved. On the contrary, I hope it will ever remain in the same state, to be taken up occasionally, as I have taken it up, for the meditation of a few minutes, but never to be submitted to the discussion of "Cool Considerations"—"Doubts in Answer to Cool Considerations"—"Reply to Doubts in Answer to Cool Considerations"—"A Letter to the Author of Cool Considerations"—"Hints to the Author of the Letter"—"Veritas' Objections to the Cool Considerations"—"Philalethes' Rejoinder to Veritas' Objections"—"The

Dog in the Manger, addressed to Philalethes"—"The Cat-in-pan, a Reply to Veritas"—"Three Bones for the Dog to pick, by Cynicus"—"A Crust to Cynicus in return for his Bones"—or any of those engaging titles, and catching artifices, by which controversies are prolonged, and paper-makers enriched. Much less would I have it submitted to any of our Debating Societies, nor even to the wisdom of a certain great Assembly, lest, after having enjoyed the use of speech from their infancy, mankind should be convinced that they had been better without it.

The object, on the other hand, of this paper is to suggest, that, should it be attempted, this question can never be satisfactorily discussed, without a previous inquiry into the history of Speech. Of such an inquiry I can find no traces in any authors antient or modern. Some have treated, indeed, of the origin of speech; but that, even when cleared up to universal satisfaction, will not answer the present purpose. My Project is, to trace its history from the earliest ages to the present time, with the same accuracy and display of antiquarian learning that may be found in works which trace the history of civil or ecclesiastic institutions, or of buildings, cities, &c. I

would first endeavour to represent speech in its original and crude state, when men spoke only when they had something to say; and from such small beginnings to mark out all the improvements and refinements introduced in various ages, and by various nations, down to the present time, when the having something to say is become a secondary consideration.

I know not what the opinion of my readers may be when they read this hasty outline; but it appears to me to open a very wide field of inquiry, and that I have thrown out a hint which might easily be expanded into three or four quartos, printed on the best wire-wove paper, and embellished with plates by the best artists. And this, I hope, will more plainly appear when I descend to a minute analysis of the supposed contents of this great work. The Historian, for example, after getting through the dark and rude ages, when men spoke only because they had something to say, a period which it will be very difficult for him to enliven by anecdotes, may proceed to investigate the precise time when speaking became talking. Talking will of course lead him to consider the various species into which talking branched out, in various nations; and it will consequently require a great deal of curious

research, to discover the origin of chattering, jabbering, prattling, and other species of *verbiage*, in France and different parts of the Continent. It will also be a very interesting inquiry, after having proved that there was a time in which men spoke only when they wanted something, to discover the precise period when they first assembled for no other purpose than what is now termed conversation. This subject will likewise admit of many digressions and lesser inquiries, particularly that very important one, at what time arose the custom of four or five persons speaking together? If this should be traced to the Wittenagemot, or to the early Parliaments, it may throw some light on the confusions of the times, and perhaps account for certain inconsistencies in law and government, which have greatly perplexed our English Historians.

Another branch of inquiry might be, into the rise and fall of Hearers, stating their antient utility, and by what means the breed became almost extinct in modern nations. Some shrewd innuendos might here be introduced on the nature and properties of Silence, what benefits some individuals have reaped from it, and how, in certain arrangements, it has been as regularly bought and sold, as it is possible

to buy and sell any negative quality. The time might likewise probably be fixed, when it was necessary to compel silence by law; and it may be stated that some remains of hearing may yet be traced, but not without a good deal of attention, in our churches, and courts of law.—Upon the whole, a very affecting episode might be introduced to the memory of departed hearers, and a pathetic display made of domestic society at those distant ages when some spoke and some listened.—I know not whether under this head, likewise, a chapter might not be devoted to the invention of cards, most whimsically intended to prevent the use of speech, and, yet more whimsically, for the preservation of absent reputations. Whoever has been within the sound of a quadrille table, must be sensible that there is great room here for investigation; and whoever has witnessed the furious bursts of speech in the dealing intervals of a game at whist, will be able to paint in their genuine horrors the awful consequences of pent-up words.

The Historian, having bestowed many luminous periods on these subjects, might next open a new field of investigation, by inquiring into the origin of Whispers. This, I humbly think, he might easily trace to the barbarous

laws of our ancestors, respecting churches, senates, courts of law, and a few other places, where it is absurdly thought, that one man only should speak, and all the rest listen; as if this was possible, in the church, for instance, where people seldom meet but once a week, and where, consequently, there must be a number of appointments to settle, disappointments to regret, dresses to be criticised, marriages to be foretold, and other matters arranged, which surely can never be accomplished so easily as when the parties are within ear-shot of one another. It might also be inquired, at what time whispering was introduced as a circulating medium for personal history, and family anecdote, and when, and in what cases, it is to be tolerated in company, and under what regulations.

From whispering, the transition would be easy to those parts of speech which the Historian might prove were totally unknown to mankind in the early ages, I mean, nods, winks, and shrugs. Those who have hitherto treated of the faculty of speech, dwell much upon what they call its organs, and are very profound on the tongue, the lips, the teeth, &c. but wholly omit the eyes, the curvature of the neck, and the motion of the shoulders, although

it is notoriously known that in our times, these are a source of eloquence, full of persuasion, and very minute in information. "The tongue," says a very antient author, "is an unruly member." It was wise, therefore, in refined speech, to make use of members which are more within our command, make less noise, and yet are equally communicative. As to the language of the eyes, there is some reason to think it is of considerable antiquity; but, if our Historian wishes to be eloquent on this subject, I would advise him to consult as many as possible of his female acquaintance. In investigating, however, the origin of winks, nods, and shrugs, he will again be obliged to censure the barbarity of some of our laws, particularly the law of libels, by which the detail of a choice bit of news is taken wholly out of the province of the tongue, and confined to those hieroglyphics which the eyebrows, the head, and the shoulders compose. And hence, probably, it is, that certain anecdotes are said to be dragged in "head and shoulders." Be this as it may, the law of libels unquestionably first imposed the necessity of speaking in this manner. It originated in France when an arbitrary power; and at this moment, if my information be not incorrect, it is brought to such perfec-

tion in that country, as to be the only mode in which political topicks are discussed.—With us its principal use is in circulating little anecdotes of one's neighbours, and, occasionally, in replying to the commands or wishes of parents and guardians. In the City it is found of considerable service in transactions between borrowers and lenders, and generally puts a final stop to the importunities of the former. On 'Change, too, it is frequently used; and some eminent merchants and bankers have attained so great perfection in the wink and shrug language, that, if they describe a man's affairs in it, it is an infallible sign of a *whereas*.

I have now suggested my plan, as far as the limits of this paper will admit; and it is probable that an hundred collateral topicks might be introduced to enlarge the volumes, without invading that breadth of margin which is now accounted so ornamental. But these will readily occur to the gentleman who shall undertake to execute what I have, I must say, so ingeniously planned; and when I thus unfold my schemes for the public good, I hope I shall rescue the name of one PROJECTOR at least, from the imputations so generally advanced against PROJECTORS; namely, that they are a selfish and interested race of men, whose

habits ought ever to be rusty, and their poverty proverbial.

If it should be asked what will be the probable result of all this? will it end in proving what Cicero and Locke have left as a matter of doubt, that mankind had better been without speech? To this I beg leave to answer, that although, in so elaborate a work as I have projected, the reader will often be tossed between *pro* and *con;* yet, under all the circumstances of modern times, it may be proved that speech is highly useful. It may be proved that, although there was a time when men spoke only because they had something to say, the moderns have improved the faculty to the greatest possible advantage, by speaking in defiance of the want of materials, occasion, or necessity. It may be proved, that although there was an age when men spoke to be understood, and would think they had thrown away their time and breath if they had not been understood; certain moderns have found it far more convenient, and even profitable to themselves, to speak with no other view than to perplex their hearers, and obscure the subject they undertook to explain. If all this, or even the greater part of it should be proved, by the

work I have projected, who will say that this paper is useless?

I have yet one part of the plan to suggest, without which perhaps it may be thought I had paid a very slight attention to it. I mean, that the ingenious author, in tracing the progress of speech, will have an opportunity of remarking to what sex we owe that perfection in which we now find it. Doubtless this must give rise to many ingenious speculations, because the subject will necessarily be involved with those already mentioned, *hearing*, *listening*, &c. It may also afford the author an opportunity of displaying his knowledge of musick, by a curious digression on solos, duets, trios, quartettos, quintettos, and other domestic pieces, that are usually performed in lieu of a *concert*. He may also regret the disuse of certain styles of musick, as the *adagio*, the *andante*, the *dolce*, the *pastorale*, and the *grazioso*, and the noisy preference given to the *ad libitum*, the *fortissimo*, the *prestissimo*, the *fantassia*, and the *capricioso*. He may yet make a farther display of various knowledge by inquiring, upon medical grounds, whether speech was not originally given in great profusion to persons of sedentary and domestic habits to supply the place of exercise? I once

had nearly finished a very acute treatise on this subject, when I was obliged to desist, from not being able to find a sufficient number of persons of sedentary and domestic habits to justify my theory. But this, and every other topick, direct or incidental, I shall now leave to the ingenuity of the gentleman who may fill up the outline I have sketched.

I have only to add, that as no subject can be injured by an impartial investigation into its history, modern speakers will not suffer by any comparison that may be made between their customs and those of their ancestors. If our ancestors said little, and that little to the purpose, I presume this was sufficient for a semi-barbarous state of society. In our times, we must encourage luxuries as well as necessaries, and every one knows that talking would deserve to be reckoned the greatest of luxuries, if to some persons it were not cheap, and to others painful. If we have contrived, by emerging from the ignorance of our ancestors, to speak without any necessity, motive, or object; and are indifferent as to being understood, and not very nice as to the meaning of our words; these must be reckoned among the refinements and improvements which the ingenuity of centuries has produced. The antients

can deserve no praise for doing what necessity dictated, and what necessity only made them repeat; but surely the merit of great ingenuity must be allowed to those who first invented, or successfully practise, the art of "speaking for speaking's sake."

THE PROJECTOR. N° 29.

"I wonder that, in the present situation of affairs, you can take pleasure in writing any thing but NEWS; for, in a word, who minds any thing else?"

SPECTATOR, Vol. VIII.

March 1804.

DEARTH of News is a misfortune more generally regretted than perhaps any other in which a man can honestly say that he is interested. It is, indeed, a complaint so frequently urged, that I have long given my days and nights to remove it, by a Project for increasing this valuable article beyond all probable demands, and all variations in the state of consumption.

Among other plans which suggested themselves during my contemplations on this subject, one was to increase the number of Newspapers; and to those who take, as I took at that time, but a superficial view of the subject, it will, perhaps, appear self-evident, that if you increase newspapers, you multiply news. These useful vehicles do not at present amount to more than forty; I mean those which are published weekly in London. My first notion, then, was, increase them to an hundred, that is, twenty morning and as many evening papers, with a proportionable increase of those which are printed twice, thrice, or only once a week. But what is very correct in theory will sometimes be exceedingly defective in practice. If we examine the contents of the papers by which the world is already enlightened, if we consider what a small portion of news any one contains which the others are not in possession of at the same time; we shall be convinced that this scheme would only be like multiplying the number of persons who were to tell the same story; it would be increasing our evidence, without adding to our facts; or, what may be heard on many occasions, an old gentleman or gentlewoman repeating the same story over and over again,

not because we had never heard it, but because they had forgot they had ever told it.—"Thus," says a learned predecessor * of mine, "journals are daily multiplied without increase of knowledge. The tale of the morning paper is told again in the evening, and the narratives of the evening are bought again in the morning. These repetitions, indeed, waste time, but they do not shorten it. The most eager pursuer of news is tired before he has completed his labour; and many a man who enters the coffee-house in his night-gown and slippers, is called away to his shop, or his dinner, before he has well considered the state of Europe."

I soon, therefore, entertained more than a slight suspicion of the efficacy of this measure, unless there were any prospect of the supplementary Journalists being able to furnish an additional quantity of news, and I willingly gave it up. As to my other plans, I shall not specify them; it may suffice that, after due deliberation, they were all discovered to be equally inefficacious. Under such circumstances, my malicious readers only, if I have such, could derive any pleasure from a detail of them, and from being able to say, many years hence,

* IDLER, No. 7.

that "one of the most celebrated of modern Projectors was noted for inventing plans which he was not able to execute, and for raising expectations which he could not gratify."

Still, however, I have not lost sight of the subject, and am more and more convinced, from all I hear, that a dearth of news is a calamity, more frequently complained of than any other privation to which we are subject. A bad harvest, for example, can occur but once a year, while we are every day in danger of a famine of intelligence. Duly impressed with such an apprehension, I have once more turned my thoughts to the subject; and although I have hit upon no new Project to counteract a scarcity of events, I flatter myself that I can offer a few remarks, which may, in a considerable degree, prevent the dreadful effects of such scarcity whenever it shall prevail; and, surely, this undertaking may be allowed to possess some merit. If we cannot afford plenty of any necessary of life, it is our next duty, either to find a substitute, or to prevent absolute starvation, by turning the appetite into some other channel.

In the first place, then, I would entreat my readers to reflect, in times of the dearth of news, whether the article be really of the first

necessity. And here I must premise, that the lovers of news are not all agreed as to the article itself. A very great proportion of newsmongers have no pleasure but in the events connected with war; and these are the original *Quidnuncs* of this nation, so admirably represented in the person of Mr. Addison's Upholsterer; and of all others, are the most insatiable. Their delight is in camps and fields, in fortresses, and sieges, and battles; the mail that brings no battle, in their opinion, brings nothing worthy of the attention of a rational being; and the more bloody the battle, the more satisfaction it yields. Indeed, their existence may be said to depend on a state of war. When peace returns, their whole faculties seem, like the regular troops, to be disbanded; and they remain in an almost torpid state, interrupted only by expressions of dissatisfaction, until some disturber of Europe again sounds the trumpet. Then they rouse themselves, unfold the large map, and are again ready to trace a march or a retreat, or, with comprehensive dignity of research, cover the seat of war with their thumb.—While the main body are thus employed in the field, a detachment, who have perhaps less courage, or whose ambition wisely takes another turn,

bestow all their attention on the internal politicks of the day, and think nothing *news* but the debates in Parliament, or the surmises about probable changes of administration. They are seldom satisfied with less than sixteen columns of debates, and, after all this fatigue, their faculties remain so entire that many of them are able to count the division.

Another class, perhaps as numerous as the former, but who seem to be of a less ambitious kind, and seldom willing to embroil themselves in the affairs of the Continent, are they whose news must be all of the domestic kind. They pass hastily over a Gazette, or a Hamburgh mail, or a parliamentary debate, to arrive at a duel, a crim. con., a rout, a murder, or any other amusing occurrence within *one's own sphere.* Such persons are very apt to suffer by a dearth of news; but certainly their appetites must be uncommonly voracious, when they expect that by any means such articles as I have enumerated should be served up every day. Of late, as far as my information goes, they have been sufficiently plentiful to content a person of moderation. But intemperance grows by what it feeds on; and if these persons had been kept on a more slender diet, and allowed, for example, but one duel *per* month, or an elope-

ment every six weeks, they would have been better œconomists, and, by proper management, have made the article last out that time. On the other hand, these articles have become cheap and common, and are therefore wasted, or thrown by, after the first day, which every matron must allow is very bad housewifery. Such newsmongers ought, however, to be thankful that now and then, those who provide their favourite delicacies contrive to vary them in such a manner that they have an air of novelty, and even an epicure can indulge for a whole week. A late elopement, for example, appears to have been prepared with wonderful skill and zest. Such a mixture of force and inclination, such a proportion of mystery and plain-dealing, has seldom met in any affair of the kind; not to speak of the wonderful discovery, that neither religious principles, nor moral precepts, are half so excellent a preservative of reputation as a small bag of camphire, suspended from the neck by a steel chain. It might have reasonably been expected that such an incident, and such a discovery, would have occupied the attention of the *amateurs* of news for at least a month; but so eagerly is every thing of this kind devoured, and, as it would appear, so easily digested, that it scarcely out-

lived the third day, nor have I heard of any extraordinary rise in the price of camphire. It was, however, I must in justice say, counterplotted by two fatal duels, which, after serving their turn, gave way to other occurrences more interesting. These duels, by the way, afford another instance of an insatiable thirst for news, merely for amusement, or to season a glass of wine, or a dish of tea. Could it be otherwise in a country like this, that we should never think of a remedy for this barbarous practice, but, on the contrary, encourage it by affected compliments to the murdered or the murderer, and by perpetuating in the minds of the young and unthinking those false notions of honour, which must extend a crime repugnant to the laws of God and man?

As, then, opinions differ concerning the value of news, it might be an object worthy of the consideration of all lovers of intelligence, whether the world itself be in such a bustling state as to gratify every palate, or whether it may not be sometimes allowed to stand still for a few days, without offence to the readers of newspapers? But as there are few, I am afraid, who will consider the matter in this light, I shall,

In the second place, proceed with an argu-

ment more consolatory, and that is, that the dearth of news often contributes to the increase of intelligence. This may appear a paradox, but is really a truism, when we consider that the want of news is the birth of CONJECTURE; and that of all the substitutes hitherto thought of to supply the place of necessaries, nothing can be so palatable and luxurious as conjecture in a dearth of facts. Facts, indeed, even when plenty, are but dry and unpleasant, until they are interlarded with circumstantials, and garnished with conjectures. If we consider that standing dish, the *invasion;* may we not ask, on what else have we been feeding for the last six months, but conjectures, served up every morning and every evening in wonderful variety? It is to this we owe the number of troops employed, the number of boats built by our enemy, and particularly what we have repeatedly had in the newspapers, from *undoubted authority*, the very day and hour, or rather the many very days and hours, when he was to land? Let us not, then, if we lack events, despise the ingenious exercise of conjecture, which coupled, as it is now-a-days, with a smart and neat boldness of assertion, and some terrible graces borrowed from works of fiction, contributes far more to engage the

passions than a dry narrative, however true, or minute. Let us also contemplate with satisfaction and gratitude, how soon, in this current of conjecture, probabilities are swallowed up in certainties, and how soon a few harmless *perhaps's* and *probably's*, if well shaken together in a paragraph, may swell out into an affidavit.—There is this advantage, too, in conjecture; every man may not be able to procure a fact, or to be master of an event, but every man may help himself to conjecture as liberally as he pleases, and, by trying a few simple experiments on short memories, may make a most distinguished and enviable figure, either in print or conversation.

In the third place, I would observe, that the sufferings of those who languish for want of news are often to be suspected. I am afraid that there is more affectation here than some persons are aware of. We have often heard of men who could not eat, drink, or sleep-o-nights, for thinking of the contents of the last mail; but we have seldom met with such characters. Indeed, when the frosts *set in*, or when the winds continue long in an adverse point, mails will be delayed, and our food must come from foreign parts in a very circuitous way, and, perhaps, in scanty portions;

but yet I never heard of any man who took to his bed for want of a gallant retreat, or was kept awake by the hostile armies being in winter quarters; nor have our Bills of mortality ever presented so melancholy an article as "*Starved by Newspapers.*"

Lastly, whatever may be thought of these remarks, intended as remedies in the dearth of intelligence, there yet remains a most consolatory resource. We are blessed and enlightened by many persons who, when they cannot find, can *make* news; and this manufactory is in such a thriving state that the town is in a great measure supplied by it. Nor are the articles themselves more worthy of admiration, than the ornaments and little additional circumstances with which they are decorated, and which at once distinguishes them as *town-made.* Whoever peruses the sentimental decorations of a duel, or a rout, a boxing match, or a trial at the Old Bailey, a case of matrimonial infidelity, or a rencontre at Brookes's, will be convinced that plain tales are no longer the taste of the age. Indeed, I have no doubt that the time will come, when all our intelligence will partake of the ingenuity, surprizing turns, and impressive touches of a novel, and, when in lieu of the substantial

food of our forefathers, we shall take delight in these *made dishes,* and subsist for a second or third day on elopements, duels, and murders, hashed up with poignant sauces, and decorated by all the flowers of rhetorick.

I might here introduce my own practice, as an additional inducement for news-lovers to be satisfied with the short-commons which matter-of-fact affords; but I am afraid this will be thought obtrusive. I cannot help adding, however, that I have experienced an uncommon share of quietness of mind, and leisure to pursue my speculations, since I concerned myself less in those daily occurrences which are so interesting to my neighbours. I am content with intelligence at second-hand, and am so little elated at the incidents which generally compose our journals, that I am persuaded I could live very happily, if an entire stop were put to duels, elopements, gaming, and adultery, and if the time were come, when "nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

THE PROJECTOR. Nº 30.

"Ira, SUO LOCO, est optimum Dei donum." LUTHER.

April 1804.

THE instructors of mankind tell us, that Anger is a passion of very great importance. They caution us against making an improper use of it; and they prove that it is indispensable in our intercourse with the world, by the precept of one of the greatest Divines of antient times, who says, "Be angry, and sin not." Such authorities, which we Projectors hold in high veneration, ought to check the rising inclination which many persons, and perhaps some of our own fraternity, have lately felt to inveigh against this passion, as being pregnant with most of the evils incident to society. Certain recent events may have, no doubt, created a sort of temporary aversion to the indulgence of irascible emotions; but, for my own part, upon due consideration, I have no mind to disturb the antient and approved theories upon the subject, and shall admit, in the fullest

sense, the utility of anger, and mean, therefore, to confine my present lucubration to a few desultory remarks, which, at the worst, can tend only to a modification, amendment, or restriction of the said passion, without expressing the least wish or hint towards a total repeal of it.

But, at the same time, I must premise, that I know no way in which time and ink can be wasted more wantonly than in a studied panegyric on the virtues of Anger, nor can I conceive any thing more sly and artful than bringing forward proofs of its existence, as if the present age were so remarkable for Christian meekness, humility, and forbearance, as that neither a duel nor a lawsuit had occurred within the memory of the oldest man now living. Yet we hear perpetually of wags who affect to persuade young men of spirit not to put up with affronts; and we have criticks who, pretending that poets are humble, and controversial writers meek, study by all means in their power, to set them at variance. But if we separate the serious from the satirical part of such attempts, we shall find that most men still set a due value upon anger, and show by their practice that it is one of those passions which is in no danger of becoming paralytic

for want of exercise or air; and that, whether it gets vent by a pistol or a printing-office, the present is not the happiest time that ever occurred for inculcating the doctrines of honourable revenge, or preaching the blessings of a crabbed temper.

I am afraid, however, and I am not the only instance of such timidity, that the mass of mankind have claimed the privilege of being angry, without substantiating their claims either by acquisition or inheritance. I likewise suspect that some, to whom I shall not deny the right, have made a wanton use of it, merely "because they may do what they will with their own:" and that others have perused the apostolic injunction, above quoted, in such a rapid and careless manner, as entirely to overlook the latter part of it. On these accounts, while I am willing to allow anger all its merits, and would not wish to deprive any man of the exercise of his talents in a quarrel, or a controversy; I yet contend that every man claiming the privilege ought to give some proof that he understands it, and some security that he is fit to be trusted with it.

Very superficial observation may be sufficient to convince us, that this passion is not equally

divided among mankind. Some appear to have a very large proportion of it in their composition, of which they are continually making use: others seem to be more moderately gifted with irascibility, insomuch that they may be approached without any great danger; in them anger makes its appearance only on state and solemn occasions; and others there are, who rarely discover any symptom of it, either in voice or looks. The latter may be thought an extraordinary class of beings; but Nature has made nothing in vain. Many of them, by this singular apathy of constitution, are admirably calculated for certain employments in life; as, for example, to keep shops frequented by that species of tormentors who consume their time in what is called *shopping*, and who delight in plaguing all such persons as do not receive, but hope to receive, their custom. In the case, too, of those visitors, who think they do a great honour to their industrious friends, by robbing them of an hour or two every day, such a calm temper might be wonderfully serviceable, and duly indulged might, no doubt, soon deprive a man of all his weak prejudices in favour of the importance of time, and the duty of employing it in some useful purpose.—Men of this disposition also might not inaptly be

placed in the situation of ministers, either of state or church, since it seems to be a received maxim, that both ought to suffer without resentment, and may be insulted with impunity. Perhaps, too, certain domestic arrangements might render a temper of this kind very desirable; and an antient philosopher, Socrates, if biography speaks true, found it extremely convenient, on many occasions, to make a calm retreat from the storm he could not weather.

But, although anger is so variously distributed, that we rarely find two men whose rage is equal, we are not to complain of this as a misfortune which requires that the world should be new-modelled. In truth, this unequal division has many advantages, which may be contemplated either seriously or jocosely. Is not the difference betwixt a deep base voice, and a shrill tenor, a matter of great amusement during a paroxysm of anger? And then let us reflect for a moment what would be the consequence if combatants had an equal portion of anger; it must either be a drawn battle, or it must be a battle without a victory, or perhaps, to speak more properly, a victory without a triumph. Very judiciously, indeed, to prevent this, some men have contrived to

concentrate their passion by squeezing it into the size of a small cartridge. All the difference then is in the mode of venting such compressed anger; and this, I must own, is bringing matters very near an equality, for when the bores of the resentment are equal, he must be a very skilful engineer who can predict the difference in projectile force. But still we gain little by this improvement; and I appeal to the judgment of my readers to determine the end of a controversy carried on in this way. Very lately we were told of a man of honour who lost his life by the hands of the *best shot* in the kingdom. This is all in the order of things, because here was a *best shot* and a *worse;* but what would be the case if two of these *best shots* were ever to meet? The contest must either terminate in a moment, or be in danger of lasting an age. Upon the whole, therefore, although the plan of equalizing one's anger, by ramming it down the barrel of a pistol, be an improvement of some popularity, it seems but indifferently calculated to abolish those differences in the proportion of anger which are deeply rooted. And I must, by the way, take this opportunity of saying, that, popular as this plan may be, it has little to boast on the score of ingenuity. It appears

to me to have been borrowed from the practice of cock-fighters, who afraid lest, if these animals were to fight with their natural weapons, the combat would take up too much of their masters' precious time, and, what is worse, not afford them the pleasure of betting on the agonies of death: to prevent these inconveniencies, they very wisely provided steel or silver spurs, with which the animals kill one another in a minute or two. It is obvious that, when a boxer is turned into a duellist, it is by a process almost directly borrowed from the cockpit.

But, besides the unequal distribution of anger, there seems to be somewhat very capriciously artificial in the management, or perhaps, to speak more precisely, in the progress and excitement of this passion. It is commonly said that injury only, or supposed injury, can excite anger. This appears to me to be a mistake; or, to say the least, a confined view of the subject. In most men, it depends less on constitution than situation in life. I have often known prosperity put a man into more frequent and violent passions than ever he experienced when he had nothing to depend on but the bare necessaries of life. A very placid man of my acquaintance, a few years ago, contracted

a habit of taking offence, and exhibiting very dangerous symptoms of touchiness, which were wholly unaccountable, until I learned, by mere accident, the extent of the sum he had given in to the commissioners of income. It was then evident that he was acting a very prudent part, and could afford to be testy without injuring his family. In this way anger has been sometimes conveyed as the gift of a patron, and sometimes as the bequest of a friend; and, in general, it may be observed, that a man is disposed to take offence in proportion to what he takes at the Bank. But if his stock of resentment be freehold, he will burst into passions as teazing and unintelligible as the deeds of his estate. There are certain situations also, which, without making much alteration in a man's property, and perhaps even diminishing it, will nevertheless contribute very profusely to the increase and frequency of this passion. I cannot help introducing here the instance of a very worthy friend of mine, a major of volunteers, whom I long knew as a man of humour, and who loved sallies of mirth and ridicule. But, since the date of his promotion, he has been remarkably shy of a joke; and I verily think that if his commission had appeared in the unfortunate department of the Gazette, he

could not have assumed more gravity and solemnity of disposition, or have portioned out his humour in smaller dividends.

Unequal, however, as this passion appears to be in its quantity, and capricious in its dependance on external circumstances, and however unreasonable it may appear that a man's temper should be in the inverse ratio of his honours or prosperity, there is still a heavier charge to bring against men of anger, and that is, their employing so noble a passion upon things for which it never was created. And let me add that this abuse of anger has brought it into much unmerited contempt. Upon a review of what are called the fatal effects of anger for the last twenty years, in all the instances that have been made public, I have almost uniformly discovered that the causes were trifles scarcely worth the attention of a rational creature, such as horses, dogs, and a very indifferent species of women. These are beings for whom it is most surely very absurd that a man should lose his life, although I do not wish to take from them their proper merits, and am far less disposed to degrade the two former by any comparison with the latter. On this subject, however, it is not my intention to dwell, or incur the suspicion of religion or

morality, which, I am aware, are but awkwardly connected with the disputes of the stable, the kennel, or the brothel. I have more pleasure in celebrating the coolness of that kind of anger which leads a man to the *ground*, and in praising, not without a respectful mixture of astonishment, the dispassionate resentment, and amicable hatred, with which the parties meet. These are circumstances which, as an impartial writer, I cannot conceal; but on the contrary bid them heartily welcome to all the praise which is due to men who so ingeniously baffle the laws of their country, and so good-humouredly turn into ridicule the old-fashioned qualities of courage and honour. All I wish to hint, for it becomes me not to insist, is, that in these, and all other cases of anger, from a family tiff to a fatal duel, it would be very becoming to exhibit some cause better proportioned to the effect, than what is usually laid before the publick.

Some of the antients, we read, considered anger as a short madness, and others as a disease. These theories were at least rational, and the disorder in either way might be removed. Confinement or reflection will prevent all bad effects in the most inveterate cases;

but the remedy becomes very difficult when it assumes the gracefulness and popularity of a fashion, and is supported by men whose ideas of real honour are as confused as those of any other makers of fashions. It would be agreeable, therefore, if some rules were laid down for quarrelling; we have rules for almost every thing but this; and I cannot see why all should be left to caprice, and nothing of system or science introduced in an affair which is reckoned of so much importance as to justify men in defying the precepts of the living God.

As to the appearances of anger in private society, the subject is so exceedingly copious that I can offer but a very few hints. That it is useful, I am not permitted to deny, because it is sanctioned by universal custom. It is particularly celebrated for its efficacy in promoting the circulation of the blood, and therefore eminently serviceable to persons of a sedentary habit, who sit much at home, or any where else, watching the event of the odd trick. It might be mentioned too, as heightening the complexion, and consequently improving beauty. It were needless to expatiate on its usefulness in such cases as breaking a china bowl, misplacing a cap, or cane, &c. These are extreme instances, and are thought sufficient to

justify a very great portion of wrath. Nor are these so dependant on the scale of income, as the examples alluded to in a former part of this paper. Domestic anger may be traced in courts and alleys as well as in *places* and squares; and I have been witness to most passionate squabbles between persons who, to my knowledge, could scarcely bear the expence of a very moderate tiff; and I have beheld others fretting and fuming in the cast-off oaths of men of rank, or the second-hand scoldings borrowed from ladies' maids.

For my own part, whoever knows the life which a Projector is doomed to live, must know that anger is a luxury far beyond his pocket. Exposed as we are to the sneers and buffetings of the world, and yet dependant on it for the few comforts we enjoy, it would ill become us by any shew of resentment to provoke those who could in a moment take the very pen out of our hands. This fatal necessity has, in a great measure, enabled me to suppress those risings which other men may indulge as they please. But another consideration has for many years contributed to make me very easy on this score; and, as some of my readers may be disposed to adopt it, I shall conclude with remarking, that there are very

few things in this world worth quarrelling about; that anger was given for the valuable purposes of preserving from danger, and from vice, by exciting our abhorrence and resentment at its offers, however tempting; that one of the principal means whereby happiness may be promoted, is the cultivation of a benevolent disposition, and a forgiving temper; that silent contempt is the most successful resentment, and abstraction from the company of the unprincipled, the only security.

THE PROJECTOR. N° 31.

"Librorum inopiam quereris. Non refert quam multos habeas, sed quam bonos. Fastidientis stomachi est multa degustare."
SENECA, EPIST.

May 1804.

PROJECTORS may be divided into two classes, namely, into those who employ their skill on purposes of utility, and those who devote themselves to the invention of amusement; but

"their fate has been very different. Of those who have employed themselves on subjects of real utility, I shall say but little, because egotism does not become me. Of the inventors of amusement, it is frequently complained that they have ever been the greatest favourites with the bulk of mankind, because, it is said, the bulk of mankind had rather be amused than instructed. Yet, as I wish to put the most gentle interpretation on such partialities, and had rather be handed down to posterity as the most eminent Apologist than as the severest Castigator of my own times, I am inclined to think, that the popularity of the authors of amusement does not proceed so much from a principle of injustice, as from an opinion that, as the demand for amusement is urgent and clamorous, amusement may be ranked among the necessaries of life; and those persons are therefore to be praised who can supply it in the greatest quantity. Hence we ought not to repine, if some should prefer the machinery of a poem to that of a manufactory, and pay more attention to the man who diverts their leisure hours, than to him who works their looms. This must ever be the case with those to whom it is more necessary to know how to spin out their time than their cotton, and to whom the

intricacies of an amour have far more charms than the texture of the most curious web. But it is the misfortune of us serious Projectors, that we do not pay more attention to such judicious considerations as are evidently founded on a knowledge of the world; and hence we complain, that our schemes of instruction are neglected by those whose only object is to be pleased, and that we find very few disposed to listen to the plans of felicity which we anticipate in another world, because the majority are perfectly satisfied with the present. As I, however, have the honour to possess a more philosophical spirit, together with as much candour as the world can reasonably expect, I have thought proper to introduce the following remarks with the truly liberal sentiments that have just dropped from my pen.

Among the inventors of amusement, I have lately been led to consider the unfortunate situation and impending fate of Novel-writers, a most industrious and numerous body of both sexes, who have for some time past been struggling with unheard-of adventures, and incredible hardships, in order to contrive a variety of temporary delights, and relieve the tediousness of human life, which, I know not why, appears to many persons infinitely too long for

any useful purpose. Yet vast, wonderful, and indeed incomprehensible as their materials have hitherto been, there is every prospect of their being very soon exhausted, beyond all powers of replenishment. On every fresh attempt, and fresh attempts are made weekly, if not daily, I clearly perceive a decline of resources, a working-up of old materials; a furbishing, scouring and mangling of old escapes and worn-out wonders, to make them pass for new; a painting, varnishing, or plastering of old incidents; a new-vamping of old dialogue; and a botching and patching of thread-bare sentiment, which cannot very long hide the poverty of those wardrobes of the imagination, and repositories of fiction. The time, therefore, I strongly suspect, is coming, when the nakedness of the land must be discovered, and when it will be proved that the combined force of three or four hundred manufacturers of miracles cannot produce an incident that is not as familiar as a newspaper casualty. It is melancholy to contemplate in what a deplorable state a great part of the nation will be when this dreadful period arrives. I cannot dwell upon it; but must leave it to the compassionate feelings of my tender-hearted readers.

This, however, I may assert, that those who will feel this calamity with most acuteness will, at the same time, wish, and wish heartily, that the inventors of amusement had not looked down with a sort of contemptuous superiority on the projectors of cotton-mills and steam-engines. Instead of boasting that they were too sentimental to be mechanical, it would have been wiser had they condescended to borrow somewhat from the acknowledged principles of trade, and dip a little into its history. They would then have learned, that, when any article is manufactured beyond the demand for it, it either falls in price, that is, becomes cheap, common, and consequently vulgar; or, from a multitude of eager rivalships, it frequently falls off in quality. My readers, I presume, can illustrate this by many well-known and familiar instances, while I pursue my application of the doctrine to the article in question.

About fifty or sixty years ago, the *Novel* first made its appearance, and in the hands of such men as Fielding and Smollett was an article quite new, very striking, and soon became very fashionable. For a long time, these gentlemen, without aspiring to a monopoly, or applying for a patent, contrived to keep imitators at a distance. The market, however, was

but sparingly supplied; and, what will be thought very wonderful in our days, we have good reason to believe that the same novel was read over, often a second, and even a third time, and with increasing pleasure at every repetition. Some ingenious men, however, fancying that this proceeded from the scarcity of the article, as a man must wear the same coat pretty often who knows not where to get another; they imagined, that by increasing the quantity they might carry on a very profitable trade. The quantity was accordingly increased; and that, if I am not misinformed, at a very small expence. Volumes upon volumes appeared, in which the same story was repeated, with as many little variations as could be invented; and now and then an article happening to rise to some degree of popularity, more writers embarked their fame in the same concern, until at length supplies of novels were as regularly brought to sale as any other articles of home consumption; and the circulating libraries exhibited a plenty as luxuriant as an epicure delights to see in the markets of Leadenhall or Billingsgate.

It was the misfortune, however, or perhaps the mistaken policy of the venders of this article, that they were at all times more attentive

to quantity than quality, and were indifferent as to any thing good, provided they could answer the incessant demand for something new. Nor was it less unfortunate for the writers, that they did not consider the utmost extent to which it is possible to wire-draw a single passion; that of Love, which, in my humble opinion, requires less instruction from books than any other. It was at first mighty easy to groupe together a pair of unfortunate lovers, a maiden aunt addicted to contradiction and brandy, a rakish lord or colonel, an intriguing chambermaid, a spiteful sister, and a couple of flinty-hearted parents: but it became impossible to re-create and new-model these characters in such a manner as to give them the appearance of novelty. The publick, although not very soon, yet in due time, became tired of the same aunts, the same colonels, the same chambermaids, and the same spiteful sisters and flinty fathers. Even elopements lost their effect, when repeated experience proved that lovers could escape only by the door or window (the chimney was unluckily never thought of); and houses, in general, happened to have no other outlets. Stormy nights and peals of thunder, too, became hacknied; and it was discovered, although not until after much

ink-shed, that one storm is extremely like another, and that few men had the power of making their flashes of lightning, or their torrents of rain, appear more terrible than those of their neighbours. Intercepted letters, which at one time were thought indispensably necessary to create embarrassments and multiply perplexities, might perhaps differ in style or length; but when it was found out that they must either be dropt by accident, miscarried by a blundering servant, or stolen by a roguish one, there was an end to this resource. Fits, likewise, lasted a considerable time; but the best written fits cannot last always; and, however useful it has been found to bring delirium on, it became obvious to the most superficial reader, that delirium must go off again with a sound sleep. Mad scenes, however, were long very delightful, and nothing was supposed to confer more grace and dignity on a heroine, or to show more decidedly that the author understood what belongs to the tender passion; but it was at length complained, that love-madness had not sufficient variety; and that talking nonsense, by the help of *Italicks* and SMALL CAPITALS, gives but a faint idea of the conversation of a lunatick.

In this dilemma, with an exhausted treasury, and no hopes of supply from the stores of domestic love and intrigue; having completely worn out the whole race of peevish aunts, spiteful sisters, cruel fathers, gay colonels, and foppish lords, a bankruptcy seemed fast approaching, when, in a lucky hour, a new manufactory started of haunted castles, blue chambers, pale ghosts, and bloody murders. These materials were confessedly composed of the remains of the old romance, with a few additions from the annals of Tyburn, or rather from the massacres in a neighbouring nation. With what success this new scheme has been carried on for the last ten years, it would be unnecessary to detail. But here again a resource, that might have lasted for half a century with good management, was speedily exhausted by the most foolish and wanton profusion; and here again, our Projectors fell into the same unhappy blunder as before; and their employers, I am sorry to say it, were equally disdainful of past experience. Castles became multiplied as the sand on the sea-shore, and upon a foundation not much more solid; and it ought not to have been surprising, that their readers became tired of vaulted passages of the same length, and dungeons of the same darkness. It must,

indeed, be allowed, that for a year or two our castles produced a considerable variety. It was something new and delightful to exchange the elegant mansions or beautiful cottages in which the business of Love was formerly transacted, for hideous old masses of ruins hanging over the sea, or awfully frowning upon the valley: it was charming to exchange the chesnut walks, the shrubbery, or the smooth lawn, for frightful precipices, passages cut through rocks, and alpine promontories; not decorated with flowers, or cooled by zephyrs, but inhabited by tigers, or infested by banditti. It was for some time enchanting to rove amidst such scenery, while, with the help of a few terms borrowed from the writers on Gothic Architecture, the castle-builders contrived "to elevate and surprize," and to variegate their horrors with some ingenuity. But yet repetition rendered the best horrors familiar and harmless; and the most tender misses pursued their way down stone steps, fast mouldering and decaying by unwholesome damps, and continual droppings, into depths unfathomable, without fear or candle; then mounted again by back ways, and entered blue chambers without amazement or dismay; viewed glimmering tapers with as little concern as Vauxhall lamps,

and drew aside curtains, regardless whether they hid an old picture, or a dead body.

Such is the present state of these schemes of amusement. Domestic adventures are exhausted, and castles and murderers far exceed any probable demand of the markets. It may be asked, what plan can supply the place of articles already almost exploded, and become indeed so common that, if I am not misinformed by my respectable friends the booksellers, every miss and lady's maid thinks herself qualified to become her own castle-builder, and approaches the press with the confidence of a D'Arblay, a Ratcliffe, or an Inchbald. But I know not that it is within my province to suggest a remedy for every grievance of which it is necessary to take notice. I have stated what appears to me to be the cause; but whether that cause has not produced an effect which is without all remedy must be left to the sagacity of my readers. If I might, however, venture to suggest a something, it would be an act of parliament, I mean of the senate of fashion, to suspend the manufacture of novels for a certain number of years. Workmen in other branches know that, if the market is overstocked, they must stop their machinery; and if the article remains without buyers, or goes

out of fashion, they must think of some other employment. This, however, in the case of the silk-weavers some years ago, when Manchester turned the public taste in her favour, was found a very difficult matter, and I am afraid it will not be much more easy in the case of Novelists. They have lived so long in an ideal world, and among an imaginary class of people; they have been conversant so much with marvellous events and wonderful incidents, and at the same time speak a language so foreign to the business of common life, that there may be some danger in bringing them too suddenly down from the eminences on which they delight to dwell. Exportation, indeed, has been suggested to me, as a mercantile remedy for a more extensive manufacture than a country requires; and I should have cheerfully recommended to many of our Novelists who complain of the dullness of the market at home, to emigrate to some place where the article is scarce and little known. But the present state of Europe (not to speak of the war) is unfavourable to such a scheme. Alas! France and Germany are overstocked by their own productions *in this line*, and have as much need of the suspension act I have hinted at as ourselves. I must therefore leave

this subject to the consideration of the parties most deeply interested.

Before I conclude, it is but justice to remark that a scheme has of late been tried, which appears at first sight to be considerably ingenious: I allude to those Novelists, who, despairing of inventing any thing new in the way of fable, adventure, or any of the legitimate characteristicks of a novel, have introduced dialogues or dissertations on contested points of religion or politicks. This, indeed, may be said to be opening a very wide field; but how far it is likely to contribute to amusement, is not quite so certain. We can be at no loss, from recent events, to find a reason why certain writers should endeavour to poison the sources of amusement by interweaving in a novel the infidel sentiments of Voltaire or Rousseau; but their imitators must forfeit all pretensions to ingenuity if they adopt a plan so obviously calculated to interrupt the business of the scene. Nor will our political contests appear more out of place in such compositions, if they are intended as imitations of life and manners. Few readers of novels, impatient for the *denouement*, will be much pleased if detained, at a critical moment, with a discussion on parliamentary reform; nor will they

take time to trace any connexion between the revolution of France, and the caprice of a young lady about to fix a ladder of ropes to her window, and throw herself into the arms of a seducer. Dissertations on the hardness of the times, and the weight of taxes, come with a sorry grace from the pen of a writer who knows that in his last volume he is to dispense riches in the utmost profusion among all his characters. Upon the whole, therefore, although an intermixture of politicks and religion has been attempted, because it is very easy, and may be carried to any length; it can answer no purpose in rescuing the manufacture of novels from public disregard. In one case only it may afford surprize. The incident of a Novelist's taking precedence of a political writer in the pillory may be somewhat new.

THE PROJECTOR. N° 32.

"My head and heart thus flowing through my quill,
Verse-man and Prose-man, term me which you will."

POPE.

June 1804.

At a time when the alarm of Invasion has become so general as to rouse the most torpid feelings, and when threatenings are issued against every nation that pretends to a will of its own, and to an exclusion from foreign influence; it surely becomes those who belong to that great nation, usually known by the name of the REPUBLICK OF LETTERS, to consider whether they are not menaced by an invasion which threatens to destroy the independence that has hitherto subsisted between the two classes of which the said republick is composed, and to introduce such anarchy as may eventually sink both into a state of gaudy insignificance, splendid uselessness, and preposterous absurdity. I need not tell my readers that the Republick of Letters has long been composed of two distinct, and, as was usually thought,

independent and immiscible classes, the PROSE WRITERS and the POETS: and I now allude to the daring attempts of the latter to make inroads on the prose language. I am induced to take this step by the repeated complaints of our periodical criticks, whose vigilance on this occasion is highly praiseworthy. They inform us, in their surveys of particular spots, that the poetical invaders have broken down many of the boundaries, and have effaced so many land-marks, that they find it almost impossible to distinguish prose from verse without the aid of admeasurement, and the application of certain rules in their possession. They also demonstrate that in cases of dispute, the evidence produced before them is such, as can only be examined by the eye or ear, and not always even by these; and that this evil threatens, if not speedily checked, to subject the whole province of understanding to the caprice of imagination, and drown the senses in a torrent of metaphors.

That this has of late years been very much the case, I can have no doubt, from observations made by myself; but which party is most to blame, is a point not quite so clear. On the one hand, it is asserted by the plain and simple adherents of Prose, that the Poets have

attempted to inundate their territories by a profusion of tropes and figures, and have abused them in a continued strain of Parnassian language, to which they were totally unaccustomed; and that they have been repeatedly invaded by a host of bombast which has in a great measure destroyed their natural simplicity, and made them most affected, romantic, and coxcomical in their speech and writings, destroying all familiarity, and weakening many so much that they are obliged to have recourse to stilts.—On the other hand, it has no less obstinately been contended, that the Prose men, not satisfied with what their own province afforded, and conceiving, some how or other, a foolish notion of its barrenness, began to run into Poetry in quest of flowers and metaphors, and even were eager to borrow every ornament they could to decorate common-place and trite thoughts, in order to make them pass for original. Some have even gone so far as to insult the lawful government of Verbs, to create dissentions among the Genders, and to despise the Articles that have hitherto bound sentences together; and others have betrayed such symptoms of extravagance and derangement, that certain eminent criticks, at a loss

to what class their writings should be referred, have declared they were *Prose run mad.*

Such are the statements of the respective parties as to the origin of the evil complained of; and when we find such contradiction of opinions, it must be difficult to know where to fix the blame. But, if I am not mistaken, that great instructor of the human mind, History, may enable us to form a tolerably accurate judgment; for History is but a repetition of the same causes leading to the same effects, and varied only by trifling and adventitious circumstances. Now the page of History instructs us after this wise: that when a plain, simple nation, possessing few wants, and those intelligibly expressed and easily supplied, chooses to depart from its natural habits, and permits or encourages its inhabitants to mix with neighbours of a more luxurious, splendid, and showy way of living, they soon acquire an undefinable and mongrel sort of character, and in the process of time become completely subdued, while they fondly delude themselves that they are only highly gratified. The same authority will also inform us, that when the people of any nation, through caprice, or for whatever reason, become tired of its constitution and laws, break the *even line* of their

forefathers, and call in the assistance or alliance, of a powerful neighbour, that nation seldom fails to be subjugated by its allies, who are glad to profit thus by its weakness, and to gain the advantages of victory without the appearance of hostility.

Having thus appealed to historical experience, I would recommend to my readers, who are very much interested in the approach of this anarchy, to consider whether the examples I have cited are not applicable to the case before us. We cannot take too much pains to throw light upon the subject, since the parties concerned seem desirous to involve it in obscurity. It is indeed a matter that requires a great extent of retrospect, for the evil has of late years increased to such a magnitude (as the periodical criticks inform us) that it is extremely difficult to ascertain the boundaries between Prose and Verse. All we know for certain is, that they have been broken down, and that nothing is left to mark the place of their existence, but now and then a comma hoisted in the front of a word, or sometimes stuck in the middle.

The whole affair, in my humble opinion, affords matter of deep instruction and serious meditation. It most lamentably points out the

miseries which arise from our being discontented with the gifts that nature has bestowed on us, and the folly of aping the language of a country that can never be spoken in our own without the suspicion of affectation. What, for example, had plain men, simple men, telling a plain, simple story, or meditating on a series of intelligible arguments, to do with the sound of the *trump?* Why should they be anxious to wake with the *dewy morn,* to study antient *lore*, or, wandering in the *mead* or *moss-grown* path, to behold the *radiant* appearance of the sun, and contemplate the *verdant* beauties of the *rustic* plains? Why should they want so much cooling from *zephyrs,* intoxicate themselves by drinking the balmy *breezes,* or descend into the *vale* where not a *gleam* of sunshine can *pierce?* Why lament the sudden variations of our *clime,* or be, on the contrary, glad and *jocund* that they are not exposed to the *ruthless peltings* of the *pitiless storm?* Although exposed every day to the volunteer transports of the *spirit-stirring* drum, and the *ear-piercing* fife, they have yet *scaped* the *clangor* of hostile arms, and the *dire* prospect of the *ensanguined* plain *purpled* with the *streams* of expiring youth and life. The *infuriate* enemy has not yet

wetted his feet with the British Channel's *spray*: their *steeds* do not *prance* in our streets, nor have they with *barbarian gripe entwined*, in *Tarquinian grasp*, the *beauteous ringlets* of our *rosy-fingered* daughters, or *chary* matrons. Our *swains* can yet *hail* the *incense-breathing morn*: our *nymphs trip*, with *many-twinkling* feet, the *chalk-drawn* floor, or *inhale* the balsamic steams of lamps of *various hue*, without the *dread* alarms of *gore-thirstful* foes — *thrill* to the *many-sounding* orchestra *attuned* to their *sweetest sympathies*, and in *shady, blest retreats*, sip the *bland* mixtures of the *Lisbon fruit* and the *Western cane*. Why then should we scatter our *plaints* to the *viewless* winds, or exchange sound sleep for *balmy slumbers*, and mar a plain tale by *wayward fancies?*

Yet, such are the changes brought about in the Republick of Letters, by the mutual contests and excursions of our Prose-men and Poets into each other's territories, and by this strange and unmeaning commerce established between them; although they must be convinced that the commodities peculiarly belonging to, and manufactured by one class, can never suit the habits of the other, but must appear unnatural and affected. That the Poets

should wish for an intercourse of this kind, may be readily believed, because it is so very easy to assume the style of the other party: and hence it may be generally observed that when Poets become old or decayed, they insensibly run into prose, retaining nothing but their original name. Much of this, too, has been occasioned by the encouragement given to BLANK VERSE, which many very justly consider as a sort of neutral state, privileged to deal in contraband wares, to harbour smugglers, and to be the general refuge of persons who have failed, and can make no decent figure either in rhyme or reason. But it will be less easy to apologize for the avidity which prose writers have shown to borrow, or even steal, from their lofty and high-flying neighbours. They may, indeed, sometimes plead poverty, and poverty is a sore tempter. It is the duty and honour of every man to extricate himself from it by legal means and honest industry: yet I am afraid that their efforts are more frequently made to hide than to prevent this poverty; for many of them, whom the Periodical Criticks lately ordered to be stripped, had nothing on but rags and shreds, and were deficient in the common necessaries of meaning.

But whatever may be the cause of this confusion, all must allow that it is high time to put a stop to it, and ascertain the regular boundaries of Prose and Verse. For this important purpose, I know nothing more effectual than a strong remonstrance and recommendation to our Periodical Criticks, signed by Common Sense, inviting and beseeching them to apprehend all persons, of whatever rank or degree, who may be found breaking down the stiles, or straggling out of their bounds, and after stripping them of any foreign ornaments they may have borrowed, or purloined, pass them into their own country; where they may perhaps get employment from some well-disposed venders of cheese, or makers of trunks.

It has been suggested to me that the aid of Parliament ought to be solicited on this occasion; and undoubtedly it cannot be denied that an Act of Parliament is an instrument of great weight and authority, especially when supported by proper penalties, and enforced by a vigilant magistracy. But I question whether, in the present instance, such an Act could be procured. I speak it with great submission, but I must speak the truth: and the truth is, that many of the leading orators in

that august assembly have been of late years so much infected with the wandering disposition of which I complain, that I should not much like to trust them with a bill drawn up, as a bill of this kind ought to be. They are very laudably employed at present in considering the means of defending our country, and annoying the enemy; and I most heartily wish them success; and they may shew great skill in systematizing the volunteers, calling forth the militia, and training the regulars; but there might be danger in their attempting to legislate for Iambicks, Trochaicks, and Anapesticks. As the leading men among them have long acquired the art of commanding the suffrages of the country-gentlemen by luminous displays of brilliant eloquence, coruscations of argument, and scintillations and sparklings of wit, they might be somewhat reluctant to lay an embargo on the hyperbole, suspend the use of the prosopopeia, or prevent the importation of the apostrophe.

Upon the whole, therefore, I am inclined to trust more to our Periodical Criticks; and I hope the hints I have thrown out will invigorate their diligence, and make them more watchful, if possible, over the objects of their superintendance. They will thereby confer a

very great and lasting obligation on those who yet adhere to the doctrine of the independence of Prose and Verse, who are candid enough to respect each on its proper ground, but dislike that unnatural mixture which must lead to inextricable confusion, and ultimately place the English among the dead languages. I speak feelingly. It would certainly bring ruin on me if my good friend Mr. Urban were to insist that I should give a lyrical turn to my lucubrations; and I am not much more reconciled to our Epic Historians, who seem to give a preference to the ear at the expence of the understanding, and pay more attention to the periods of their sentences than to those of chronology. The writers of Novels may, indeed, be permitted to propagate a mixed breed, and blend their colours as they please, because, if they were either prose or verse, they would be nothing; but, in every other species of writing, it were to be wished that some attention should be paid to the graces of simplicity, and some to the language of common sense.

After all that I have urged, however, on this subject, I must acknowledge that we live in times of distracted opinions; and I am not so vain as to think that I can procure an immediate reconciliation. Some think that the

meaning of words may be changed, and this we know has often been the case within the last two centuries; but others are of opinion that words have no occasion for any meaning whatever, and that all the beauty of writing depends on arrangement. It would be presumption in me to decide on so important a point. We have, it is true, been accustomed at school to make what are called *nonsense verses*, but I know not why we should at a more advanced age be so partial to *nonsense prose*. I shall only, therefore, conclude with avowing certain prejudices of long standing, and among these, that a meaning is indispensable in prose; that the beauty of a meaning consists in its being easily apprehended; that upon the whole there can no great harm arise from being understood; and that some of the most elegant writers in our language are at the same time the most intelligible.

THE PROJECTOR. Nº 33.

"Puto multos potuisse ad sapientiam pervenire, nisi putassent se jam pervenisse."

SENECA de Tranq.

July 1804.

THE wisdom of man has been employed for several thousands of years in laying open the sources of knowledge, in pointing out its importance, and the fatal consequences of neglecting it; yet I know not that any writers have touched upon a subject which is very intimately connected with it, and which I have determined to handle in this paper: I mean the advantages of ignorance. We have so many encouraging treatises written to remove the difficulties which impede knowledge, that it would be impossible to enumerate them; but, as far as my acquaintance with literature extends, we have no book expressly calculated to point out the difficulty of being ignorant, and the inconveniences arising from it. Yet many emi-

nent teachers of youth have assured me that they find this one of the greatest impediments in their progress, and that they could have sent out a much greater proportion of able young men from schools and colleges, if they could have persuaded them to remain ignorant a little longer.

Something like this I have so often observed in the young men of the present day, that I am convinced the complaint is well founded, and I know not whether it is not the peculiar characteristick of the *clever fellows* of our day, that, as Seneca says in my motto, they "fail in acquiring knowledge, merely because they think they have acquired it already." It is to this, I doubt not, we must impute the slow progress made in our public schools and seminaries, and, what I deem much worse, the little use that seems to be made of books and libraries: for how can we expect that the one will be studiously attended, or the other carefully consulted by those who refuse to confess their ignorance?

In former days I can well remember that young men were not ashamed of being ignorant for a much longer period than would now be tolerated. A youth, for example, of fifteen knew scarcely anything, avowed his ignorance,

and sat in silence at the feet of his Gamaliel, that he might acquire knowledge as he acquired strength, in the course of nature. A young man of twenty was not less willing to be ignorant, and when introduced into the company of his elders and superiors, was attentive and submissive, retiring with some acquisition of knowledge, but still more and more convinced of his ignorance, and so little ashamed of it, that he often confessed it as a thing unavoidable at his age. I can remember too that even at the ages of twenty-five or more, it was not the fashion for men to suppose themselves universal scholars, or that nature and science had poured into their capacious minds the whole of their stores. They still did not blush to be unacquainted with what they had no means of knowing, and were content to wait the slow process of time and study, to remove their ignorance in a satisfactory and substantial manner. I can even recollect that some men very far advanced in life preserved the same wise principles, and to their last hour maintained the distinction between unavoidable and voluntary ignorance.

We now pursue a very different plan, with what success I shall not say, but it is certain that we can find very few in the early periods

of life who are content to be ignorant. The greater part seem to have overcome every difficulty when they have acquired the alphabet; and other kinds of knowledge pour in upon them so fast, that long before the period of manhood they have acquired all that this world can yield, and are old in every thing which can fit them for a speedy departure into another.

Among other consequences of this plan, it has given rise to the breed of *puppies*, a description of the human species very different from that incidentally touched upon by my predecessors. Puppies in former days were ignorant, and contented to be so: knowledge was not in their way; and they contrived to fill up departments in society where it was not wanted. Our modern puppies, however, are distinguished by an uncommon affectation of knowledge, which is so much worse than downright ignorance as it is more difficult to remove. The wise man has indeed long ago determined that there is more hope of a fool than of a young man "wise in his own conceit;" and I am happy to strengthen my poor opinions by so venerable an authority.

All knowledge is comparative; but although among wise men some are content to know one

thing, and some another, and although all are convinced that human life is insufficient for universal science, yet the puppy of the present times is one who knows every thing, or says he does so, which with him is much the same thing. He holds this, indeed, as a point of honour, and is so tenacious of it, that the most respectful mode of setting him right is construed into a rude contradiction which he is bound to resent; and hence so many argumentative positions have lately been adjusted by means of a bet, or a case of pistols.

It were a most desirable thing to rectify the prevailing notions respecting *shame*, of which a spurious kind is soon likely to destroy the genuine. When we consider how many things a young man cannot be expected to know, and how many things, which he may think of some importance, he ought not to know; and when we consider how slowly all really valuable knowledge can be acquired, we may surely allow that every kind of ignorance is not a disgrace. But unfortunately knowledge and courage have by some means been confounded, and a young man is unwilling to be thought deficient in a taste for literature, lest he should be thought to have no taste for fighting. Two young gentlemen, we were told some time ago,

fought a duel; the dispute was about religion, and of the point in question it was found that they were both ignorant; but then they had both commissions in the army, in which they would have us think that courage and controversial divinity should be equally flourishing.

In modern times it must be allowed that many persons incur the suspicion of knowing something at a more easy rate than formerly. Literature is sprinkled over the nation by means of journals and periodical works in such a manner, that many acquire a knack of talking about matters beyond their reach, merely by such studies as they can pursue while under the hands of a hair-dresser. In this way the puppy has many advantages over the man of business; the outside of his head being an object of much greater importance, his course of studies are prolonged in proportion to the talents of his operator, and therefore one who is engaged to a dress-ball must carry with him a prodigious quantity of information, which it is a pity should be lost in the mazes of a new dance. This mode of study, however, is now so common with both sexes, that the keeper of an eminent circulating library assures me that he can always calculate the popularity of

a new book by the quantity of hair-powder between the leaves, and has often gratified the vanity of a young author by showing him how ably his best thoughts were smoothed by pomatum, and his finest flowers scented by marechalle. This same gentleman, however, hints that he is afraid he shall ere long be a sufferer by the prevalence of wigs among his male and female customers. "They have no other time for study; Mr. PROJECTOR, than when under the hands of their frizeurs; and if they take to wigs, which they are doing very fast, they will give up reading altogether; for it can't be expected they should spare any other time for study, and I have met with some customers who, since these abominable wigs came in, have not only returned their books almost quite clean, but have actually withdrawn their subscriptions at the end of the quarter, as having no leisure to read. If it were not for the girls at boarding-schools, who have neither hair-dressers nor wigs, I don't know what would become of literature, I assure you, Mr. PROJECTOR. And, bless their little hearts, they read every thing through and through, and are wondrous knowing at an age when you would think they knew nothing."

It has always appeared surprising to me, that while the imputation of ignorance is an insult not to be borne, and while a spirited young man would rather be called a rogue than a fool, no means have been adopted to render ignorance more reputable. This too is the more surprising, as their associating with one another would seem to give countenance and support to their cause; and the care they take to exclude their elders or superiors, shews a kind of tacit consciousness that they are men of knowledge only when in each other's company. But, without attempting to reconcile these contradictions, it certainly were to be wished that no men were ashamed of ignorance, unless those who have neglected the opportunities of acquiring knowledge, and that those who would pass for men of knowledge would patiently wait the times and seasons when it might be substantially acquired. Pretenders to knowledge cannot expect to hold out long; the appearances they put on may deceive those who trust only in appearances, but they will soon find that in endeavouring to ape their superiors, they have been living beyond their income, and must have recourse to borrowing, and other tricks practised by that class of persons known by the name of the *shabby-genteel*,

who now and then give a miser's feast, but must starve the rest of the year for it.

Another unhappy accompaniment of unacknowledged ignorance is a certain degree of confidence, which, in matters of this kind, is peculiarly offensive, and forms one of the justest objects of ridicule. On the contrary, it is one of the happiest consequences of the legitimate desire for knowledge, that it lessens a man's confidence, because the more he knows, the more he finds it necessary to be unassuming and submissive. Hence, in company, we universally find that the best-informed men are the least presumptuous, and that all which disturbs social conversation, and renders it useless as to the purposes of knowledge, arises from the pert forwardness of those who know nothing, or but a little at second-hand, and who are permitted to deliver their opinions only because modern politeness requires that they should not be desired to hold their tongues.

A consciousness that knowledge is difficult to be acquired, and that the employment of the longest life is but the advancement of a few steps, would cure this propensity to reach the end without employing the means. "A little learning," Pope says, "is a dangerous thing;"

and it is more dangerous in our days than it was in his, because more easily acquired, and more imposing. The learning which would have been deemed little in his time, would now furnish a dozen literary *petits maîtres* with all they wish to know, and all they wish to acquire; a fund for impertinence, on which they might draw to supply the deficiencies of study.

As the want of an honest acknowledgment of ignorance is most generally felt in conversation, it is with a view to conversation principally that I have ventured to throw out these remarks. I should run into a strain of observation somewhat too trite, were I to pursue them farther. Yet, as it does not follow, that what is trite is universally believed, or that the truths of which we are most fully convinced are those which have most influence on our practice, I shall not be ashamed to conclude with observing, that men talk most to the purpose on subjects with which they have some acquaintance; that where we are profoundly ignorant, there can be no great harm in being profoundly silent; and that if we have had no opportunities of acquiring knowledge, it is no disgrace to avow our ignorance. The man who is asked

for news, and has none, is not justified in relating fictions; yet, perhaps, if he has a ready wit, he may even then make a better figure than him who dashes boldly into a controversy about a matter of which he has neither heard, read, nor thought, or who wishes to pass off the second-hand minutes of a former conversation as his own original ideas, the result of seeing what he never saw, or of reading what he never read. How many criticks in literature, in painting, and other fine arts, has this species of petty larceny created, and how ably has the theft been concealed by cant phrases and imposing looks! Detection, however, is neither uncommon nor difficult; and when a man's whole stock of knowledge, and even his style, are traced to the last pamphlet he met with, or to the newspaper in his pocket, it will be suspected, that although he has acquired knowledge, he has not come honestly by it.

But in recommending a candid avowal of ignorance, where knowledge is impossible, I would not be thought to mean any infringement on the rights and privileges of that class of men usually called politicians, especially if they be, what they generally are, zealous party-men. Ignorance is a more fertile source

of gratification to them than knowledge, and I cannot therefore conscientiously propose to rob them of it, or insinuate that they should substitute any thing better in its stead. Conversation would in that case be absolutely at a stand; and we should not only lose much of our *authentic* information as to what passes at home in cabinet councils, privy councils, and other *public* places, but the whole of our secret intelligence from the Continent would probably be annihilated; a state of desolation which no humane man can contemplate without a becoming horror. It is not for me to hasten such a catastrophe; but in those other respects, which have been considered in this paper, it certainly may be of advantage to the young to remain ignorant a few years longer than is the usual practice; to be convinced that knowledge is not to be acquired by borrowing or stealing with or without the risk of detection; and that a man may boldly and unblushingly avow his ignorance, provided he can prove that he had no means of removing it. And as mistakes may arise from the introduction of new words, they ought also to be apprised, that to be *very knowing* is but a counterfeit of wisdom; it is a

species of low cunning, which is much oftener seen through than the adepts in it are aware, and which when seen through takes away all pretensions to useful knowledge, and often to common honesty. Ignorance of this, whether acknowledged or not, is a peculiar blessing, and has very seldom been removed with impunity.

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